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CHRIST AND HIS BRETHREN.

THE WAY TO DEAL WITH UNBELIEF.

BY REV. RUFUS ELLIS.

THE fortunes of the gospel in the world are largely anticipated in the Gospel Records, sometimes in actual history, sometimes in parables. In the Saviour's experiences in his "own country" we have already an account of the fathers of a very considerable class of modern unbelievers. It is not necessary to suppose that the Lord failed of success at home, as he confessedly did,—and our truth-telling evangelists make no secret of the marvellous fact,—because his brethren and the people of that region were more hardened than the rest of the Hebrews, or because Satan was more busy there than anywhere else in stealing away the seed of the Word. It is at once more reasonable and more charitable to say that it was hard for those who knew the *man* to recognize the *Prophet*. In their circumstances they were exposed to the full force of the almost universal tendency to regard the earthly and human as absolutely incompatible with the heavenly and divine. It would have been better for them to have known more or less of Jesus. They have their counterparts in our day. There are persons all about us who have come into conditions not unlike those of the people of Galilee.

They do not perversely set themselves against the preaching of the gospel, or cast the Word behind them; but they are for the time unprepared to be duly impressed by it. In the development of religious opinion, and the antagonisms of intellectual commerce with divine things, they have been led to know Christ after the flesh, and in the purely human experiences of his life, in the limitations inseparable from the mystery of the Incarnation, which He, as freely as any, was wont to confess, and which, indeed, were accepted as the conditions of success in his redemptive work. They have emphasized afresh as the great lesson for the day, the old orthodox doctrine of the Lord's proper and perfect humanity. They have insisted that the Incarnation is not to be regarded as God playing a part in our world. The affirmation was needed, and had it not been accompanied by a denial, nothing could have been more seasonable. The world can be saved, not by the half of a great Truth, but by the whole of it. Nevertheless, we may unhappily be slow to perceive that the essentially Divine, God who is Love, God who is longing to pour out his whole heart to the world, may take to himself the human; and in our eagerness to say that the Saviour of men was a man, and could hardly have saved us had he not been a man, we may consciously or unconsciously fail to recognize that he was in the depths of his being, and in the clear light of his consciousness, Son of the Father before all worlds. Far beyond what most of us realize, it runs in our heads that God cannot dwell in man in all the plenitude of his redeeming Spirit unless the man teaches an absolute philosophy, or professes to know everything, or dominates the world as uncontrolled force. We refuse ourselves the unspeakable comfort of believing that God himself has verily possessed himself of and pervaded our humanity, redeemed it to the uttermost, and found himself and been found of himself in the life of man, in One who could say, "I and my Father are one," because the Wonderful was only Supreme Love incarnate, Supreme Love, and the Wisdom, not unto curiosity and science, but unto life which is inseparable from

love. We forget that when Love is once for all fully embodied in an actual life on earth, Redemption has fairly begun. Out of the heart are the issues of life; the heart needs only abundant love. That strong Son of God is the world's Saviour. Out of that innermost redemption proceed all other redemptions,—of science, art, every-day work, homes, societies, governments. Our discussions about the Saviour's authority threaten to be endless and profitless, because we fail to see that it is the authority of the Father who is Love, and who spake by the lips of his Son words which, if we question, when we are confident that they were his words, we can only bring into doubt our own moral and spiritual condition. It is not a controversy of the human intellect with the revelation of the Eternal Thought; we have had no such revelation, it is the controversy of man's heart with Christ's heart, which again is God's heart,—“if our Gospel is hid, it is hid unto them who are lost, whose eyes the God of this world hath blinded.” Jesus does not silence the intellect with dogmatic affirmations; he quiets the heart with Truth unto life. But, whilst we are striving through these antagonisms to reach the whole doctrine of Jesus, the light of that glorious and gracious knowledge is hid, and meanwhile the power of the Divine Lord is not felt as it should be. We are compassed about by sincere Theists, warmed some of them to a very genial glow and a very healthful activity by a Sun which they have ceased to call a Sun, because a veil over their own eyes hides it from them. It is in many quarters as it was with the Saviour at Nazareth. He can do no mighty works. He can inspire and organize no missions. He can only marvel that such reasonable doctrine does not persuade such reasonable men, that such scriptural and humane views do not carry the multitude with them. He lays his hand only upon a few sick folk and heals them. We maintain a few home charities of which, perhaps, we make a great account, as if we were the workers in Christendom in distinction from the dreamers and speculators, as if no one ever did anything about the

poor and degraded before, as if the Holy Spirit of Jesus had not been the Comforter from the very first, as if St. Francis of Assisi, and Francis De Sales and Xavier and St. Vincent de Paul were mythical persons; and all the while Christ is marvelling at our unbelief. And what we want to understand for the sake of truth as for the sake of charity is this, that unbelief and inefficiency do not necessarily proceed from special hostility to the Truth; that, on the contrary, they are sometimes to be noted in specially honest persons, and in those who, within a certain range, are well informed as to the facts in the case, nay, it may be, know more, though unhappily not enough more, than their neighbors. The restoration and the increase of belief can be promoted only through a better understanding of the causes of unbelief, and not by vague denunciations of the spirit of infidelity and warnings against evil and worldly hearts. The disease requires a broader treatment, a treatment of which happily Christ himself has given us example. He had this precise form of unbelief to deal with, and it is our purpose in this article to set forth his short method with it.

1. And we have to say first, that this method did not make much account of the appeal to miracles. He did not many mighty works because of their unbelief. We see how open the frank narrative is to the caviller and the scorner, and yet the evangelist must make it plain at all hazards that Christianity does not aim to compel belief through the stress of mighty works. God deals with men through character. If it were not so, miracles would most abound where there is the most scepticism; but we know that the precise opposite of this is the case. We know that they are not the props of a declining faith so much as the outgrowths and ornaments of a vigorous faith. They aid, but they do not beget belief. The genesis of faith is moral. It is not in accordance with the Saviour's method to put miracles forward, as they are put forward in what are called Books of Evidences, and to demand assent to them as preliminary to a Christian confession properly so called. Undoubtedly such



a postponement of the topic may be misrepresented. As the Galileans perhaps said of Jesus, "He is, after all, only the son of Joseph; he can do nothing save amongst the zealots and half-crazed people of Jerusalem," so it may be said by some in our day, "The preacher does not believe in the miracles himself; he has outgrown that old superstition, and knowing that the world will presently give up all belief in them, he is trimming the ship for the coming tempest, and is throwing overboard all that can be spared." So silence will be misinterpreted; but we do believe in the miracles, and, whatever men think or say, it remains true that it skills not either to work or to preach miracles where the very mind and heart of faith need to be almost created.

2. We have to say again, that as Jesus did not undertake to dominate the intellect of man by outward authority, so neither did he seek to save the world by the demonstrations of science, what is called scientific theology. He did not argue for God and Providence and Immortality, reasoning deep and high with the simple villager or the worldly citizen. That would have been as useless then as it would be now. Knowledge puffeth up. It pleases God to hide these things from the wise and prudent. The world is now nearly nineteen centuries older than when Christ taught in it, and according to our best understanding of scientific people, what are called advanced thinkers, those of them who so much as venture to promise a demonstration of the great truths of religion are in a very small minority. It is admitted on all hands that the Gospels supply at the most only the materials for scientific theology, not the thing itself. Undoubtedly the Spirit of Love enriches the intellect in the end unto all utterance and all knowledge and all beauty, but the mere reasoner or logician finds little in the evangelic records to interest him. God speed any and every earnest effort in the cause of Truth! Let whosoever can show to the world that the heavens declare the glory of the Creator, and that the Workmaster is discovered in the least of his works; but, somehow, when we begin on that side, we are

not much prospered, science rapidly sinks into nescience, and when any great vital truth is in question, the verdict of the philosopher is very likely to be "not proven." The methods of science were not, and are not, specifically the Christian methods. Sometimes the Saviour drops into an argument to show his countrymen how inconsistent they are with their own Scriptures, or how untrue to their own traditions; but, for the most part, he makes no appeal to the mere understanding of his hearers, and is as far removed as possible from any of the refinements of philosophic speculation.

3. What remains, then, it may be asked, if miracle and science are inadequate; if we can appeal neither to outward authority nor to the demonstrations of science? Nothing, some seem to think. Nothing remains but to amuse, so far as we may, with literature and art, a world that has lost its God; nothing but to make the most of this life, seeing that we have and can have no evidence of any other; nothing but to celebrate scepticism as the latest triumph of advanced thought. Not so, however, did the Christ judge even in those cities and villages where he found the most obstinate unbelief. It is said that he went about amongst them "*teaching*." The word of Jesus was a word of FAITH. It was with power because his Being supplied the adequate conditions of FAITH. It has been said by one who has no confidence in the argument from miracles, that to appeal to the individual spiritual and moral intuitions of which the persons who are addressed are unconscious is absolutely futile; and he tells us, with more point than truth, that the only way to make science religious is to make religion scientific. Now, we maintain, on the other hand, that Christ's preaching, and all true preaching since the world began, is an appeal to spiritual and moral intuitions, a description to men more or less blind, or seeing, or at least saying that they see, of the visions of Faith, of God our Father, of the ministering and providential angels, of the Life to come. All other ways of propagating the religious life in the world are conditioned by and must go along with this of faithful testimony, which is always simple affir-

mation from faith to faith, — what some will call the foolishness of preaching. The virtue went forth from Christ because it was in him. The intuitions of Peter, James, and John may have been more or less clear before Jesus came to them; but when he had come and spoken, they saw because he saw, they knew because he knew. They had, they said, the mind of Christ. What is very encouraging, in the field of the world, as in the other fields, that shall presently invite the sower, the very seed, only sow it often enough and patiently enough, will in time create for itself a soil, and cover the flinty rocks with the tiny plants, the little creeping growths that predict giant trees, not to speak of that sterner husbandry by which God wears the surface and strikes down into the very heart of the stony ground.

The hiding-place of this spiritual and moral power is Being and Character, God in Christ, Christ in us. There is no salvation by outward work or by outward word. As a man thinketh in his heart, so much is he, and so many can he persuade, and sweep along with him in loyal and glad following. You see good deeds and are not always made better even by that blessed sight. We read and hear good words, and are not always profited by reading and hearing. Line upon line and precept upon precept, and nothing comes of it. You say, if we followed that admirable teaching, we should be all right; but we do not follow it, and are not all right; no virtue goes from the speaker to help us follow it. It has been well said that "moral life is no creation of moral phrases." If fine words would redeem the world, there would not be a sinner in it to-day. The fulness of the Gentiles would have been gathered into the kingdom of God long ago. How easy it would be to flood the earth with religious eloquence, to carry a perpetual stream of it into every man's house, to scatter pious tracts as thickly as the autumn leaves, which, unhappily, they too often resemble in seariness and juicelessness, — how easy, and how useless! For it is what lies behind the word that does the work. We must carry the tract, and we must be the tract after we have carried it.

There must be spiritual and moral virtue going out from us. The multitude felt so strongly what virtue there was in Christ, that they said, "It will do us good if we can but touch the hem of his garment;" and it did do them good. True to the spiritual fact, we call the most persuasive speaking acting; the speaker is for the time an actor, a doer. It is not easy to mistake about real Force; it steals out of a man unawares. It is impossible to exercise it unless we have it. You might almost as well try to deceive Almighty God in this as to deceive his children. The thin voice and the hungry eyes betray the starved soul. The talk is of beneficence, perhaps, and it would be an incivility to go behind all those fair professions and plausible excuses; but the Spirit discerneth all things, and, as sure as ice chills, you are in the presence of a starved soul. True to this law the multitude made confession of the Christ when they said, "His word is with power, and he speaks to us, not like our scribes, but as one who hath authority." Others had taught the Truth, the same or similar, and yet never man spake like this man. Others had wrought wonders, had even brought back the dead to life, not to speak of any lesser miracles, but this man alone was The Wonderful. It was exactly as he said: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." There was every mark of real power. He attracted and he repelled. There was the blow and the rebound. The heavens and the hells confessed him, sure tokens both of awakening life, and that God is visiting his people. Angels ascended and descended, and demons begged for mercy. John and James, and Matthew and Joseph, called Barnabas or the Consoler, signalled his power, and so did Caiaphas, and Herod with his men at war, and Pilate with his Roman soldiers; nay, also, the wary Gamaliel, as it began to dawn upon his life-long conservatism and quietism that even Jewish rulers might possibly be found to have been fighting against God. If we are willing to receive it, how much is revealed to us here of the mystery of the Christ! The sounds that had gone forth into the world

from other lips had returned to them void, — sweet sounds, sweetly-echoed, earnest words, many of them earnestly heard, — and the shadows which hung over the world grew deeper, and the hearts of true men grew more and more sad. They spoke the truth, those wise men, and were not without the light which enlighteneth the sons of God everywhere; but mankind was scarcely the better, the more believing, the truer, the more loving and peaceful, for all their speaking, as they themselves sorrowfully confessed. But when at last One came who *could* persuade, who *did* create moral life, what did he say of himself? Why, no less than this: “*I am* the Truth, *I am* the Way, *I am* the Resurrection;” for in all that uplifts, redeems, saves, blesses, he was what he taught and did, the Power of God, the Wisdom of God unto salvation. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, so Paul read the mystery; and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, that was St. John’s interpretation; but the power did not depend upon the interpretation, though a wise interpretation may put us within reach of the power. Ebion and Arius, and Sabellius and Athenasius may all share it. The Sun has been shining down upon this earth for so many centuries, and only in this century do we begin even to understand how it burns and shines and blesses us spite of our deep ignorance! His word was with power long before he was declared to be the Son of God indeed, risen, ascended, glorified. It was the Word of God, though veiled, which was quick and powerful. It was the Word that prevailed over unbelief. It was the Word that should exercise all power in heaven and earth. He suffered and died only that he might more truly and masterfully reign. The first-begotten from the dead became the Prince of the kings of the earth, — his eyes are as a flaming fire, his voice as the sound of many waters, “the golden lamps are at his feet and in his hand the stars.”

And what most of all concerns us to know in an unbelieving world is just this, that the Word of Faith is still spoken; that the Power has not left us. Christ’s method with unbe-

lief is still available for man's recovery from doubts and denials, and a huge responsibility rests upon those to whom it is given to carry forward what he began. Others may labor as they shall be able upon the problems of religious science, it is their duty to put the very heart of Christ into the simplest Christian testimony, not merely repeating his words, but so reproducing them that they will be the voice of his Spirit in the world. What science hopes in some better day to demonstrate, the Christian, if he be a Christian indeed, with Christ in his heart, already knows, and can declare as the oracles of God. Christ sends such forth, and only when such go forth does anything come of it. They do not argue, they testify. They unfold the contents of that great Revelation which, through the Lord, has got a place in the world's heart. When that testimony goes forth, the world saith still, "Never man spake like this man!" "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." There are those who are spoiled by a narrow philosophy, or prevented by the fashion of the day's scepticism from allowing the appeal to miracles; there are those who, for the time, cannot believe in miracles; there are those who will discuss theology with you to weariness, and will tell you what Auguste Comte and Sir William Hamilton and Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. Mill think about this and that, doubting all the while whether anybody knows much about divine things, whether it is not still true that the world by wisdom knows not God; but let the prophet come prophesying even according to an humble measure of genuine faith, let him believe so much himself as to marvel because of the unbelief of others, and how quickly the voices of the disputants drop into silence, whilst young and old listen to the blessed word of the kingdom, of the God that hears and answers prayer, of the loving Providence, of the Lord of life and death who came to reconcile us to living and dying. The soul drinks in such speech as the parched earth drinks in rain, for man was created to believe and Faith begets faith. To Christ in us, and the Hiding-Place of that power is the heart of man,

the souls of men open as the flowers open their cups to the Sun. In the presence of the Spirit incarnated in the body of believers as once in Jesus, spirits dead in worldliness awake, and glorify God, saying that a great Prophet is risen up amongst us, and that God is visiting his people, as indeed he is. The Teacher is gone beyond the reach of our weak senses; but the teaching may go forward all the more. The Jews still require a sign, and find none altogether satisfactory, none sufficiently well attested. The Greeks still seek after wisdom. The wise and mighty, the prudent and the disputers of this world, still despise or patronize Christianity as the humor of the hour may guide them; but the heart of the multitude, which belongs neither to the dogmatist nor to the philosopher, yields to the Word of Faith, does the will and presently learns of the doctrine, draws near to God in Christ, and God in Christ draws near to its earnest apprehending and seeking, confesses at last the wondrous divine grace in Christ, and is no longer without hope because without God in the world. Then all the wonders related of the Christ become credible, and, being believed, enrich our apprehensions of things in heaven and earth with miracles that are not dreamt of in any of our philosophies, and the whole gospel, the natural and the supernatural alike, takes its place in the world's affectionate and revering regard.

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"HAPPINESS is to feel that your soul is good; strictly speaking, there is none other, and this one can exist even in affliction. Hence it is that there are sorrows preferable to all joys, and which would be preferred to them by all who have experienced such sorrows."

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"SELF-IMPROVEMENT must precede all other improvement. Whatever miraculous creations have been scattered over immensity by the Divine Hand, all must first have existed in the Divine Thought."



## JESUS AND SOCRATES COMPARED.

BY REV. E. H. SEARS.

THE two lectures of President Felton on the religion of Greece\* contained in the beautiful volumes described on another page of this Magazine, give a most vivid and impressive description of this religion in its twofold aspect. As esoteric—the religion of its best and most philosophic minds—its teachings were sublimely spiritual and its morality was pure. As exoteric—as the religion of the people—it was a wretched and drivelling superstition. The religion of its more devout philosophers was that of pure theism. It would be difficult to name any moral precept of Christianity which could not be gleaned from the writings of the Grecian poets and sages. But these poets and sages, while they rose intellectually above the absurdities of the national faith and secretly laughed it to scorn, never dared to assail it, or if they did, it was at the peril of their lives. The oneness and spirituality of God and the immortality of the soul are affirmed both by Thales and Pythagorus; and Cleobulus utters these semi-Christian precepts: "Do good to your friends that their friendship may be strengthened, and to your enemies that they may become your friends. Avoid injustice, bridle the love of pleasure, do violence to no man." The motive, however, for doing good to others, including enemies, does not rise entirely clear of self-love. Jesus says, "Do good to your enemies, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven;" Cleobulus says, "that ye may make them your friends." Xenophanes taught, "There is one eternal, infinite, immortal Being, by whom all things exist, and this one being is God. Incorporeal and omnipresent, he hears all, sees all, but not by human senses. He is at once mind, wisdom, eternal existence." Heraclitus affirmed that the universe is governed by one unerring Supreme Will or Deity. He told his coun-

\* See Lectures IX. and X. of the Second Course in Vol. I.

trymen of Ephesus that they might as well pray to the stones of their houses as to stone images, and for this they banished him. Anaxagorus taught the doctrine of "one God, the intelligent Mind which has given movement and form to the atoms of the universe, and which, though pervading and governing all nature, is separate and unmixed with any material substance;" and for such sublime teaching only the eloquence of Pericles saved him from death and procured the commutation of the sentence to banishment from Athens.

But the Greek religion, philosophy, and morality all culminate in Socrates, and much as we had read of him, he passes before us in these pages warm and fresh as if he walked the streets of Athens only yesterday. He is "a universal presence in the life of Greece," says Mr. Felton, "and we meet him at every turn." Go where you will,—in the city or outside its gates, in the streets or in the Academy or Lyceum,—there is Socrates with his uncouth figure, and most un-Grecian face and mouth, dropping honey from his tongue to a crowd that follow him and hang about him entranced. In his manner of teaching, going about with the people thronging him, he reminds us of the Great Teacher himself, though when we come to the person of Socrates, the comparison fails.

How he pierced through the shams of his day, and exposed the poverty and emptiness that were concealed under the tinsel of the sophists! Gorgias, the sensation lecturer, the popular orator, the "powerful speaker," had come to Athens. The young men hasten to hear him, charmed by his eloquence and the rhythm of his sentences, and he is about to achieve a great success, the most popular course, no doubt, of the season. Before he has done, a droll figure walks in, a man with pug nose, bald head, round body, barefooted, without his tunic, or, as we should say, in his shirt-sleeves, doubtless with the stick in his hand with which he used to bar the way of street-passengers and probe them with his questions, his eyes twinkling with shrewdness, and when he speaks, with a touch of irony in his tone. This is Socrates,—known so well

in the streets and shops of Athens. He puts a modest question to Gorgias, only just for information. This leads on to another and yet another, each probing deeper than the former one, till the hollowness of all the lecturer's word-magic and the profligacy of his profession are palpably exposed. They are drawn into an earnest discussion of higher themes, — of things instead of words, — justice, mercy, and faith, the immortality of the soul, eternal retribution, the meanness and, wickedness of vulgar ambition and the blessedness of purity and virtue, — the very themes and reasonings that made Felix tremble. "No one," says Socrates, "who is not utterly wanting in sense and manhood fears to die. Sin is a thing to be feared; for it is the most dreadful of evils to pass into the other world with the burden of sin upon the soul."

Such was the prophet of Athens who said he spake from promptings which we should call in Christian phrase the voice of his angel. Mr. Felton says his argument on the existence of God anticipates all the material points of Paley's beautiful reasoning from the appearance of design. "It is a proof of benevolent forethought that the eye, being delicate, is protected by the eyelids, which are opened when it is used and closed when it is asleep; that the ear receives all sounds without being filled," — and so on through every part of the body the acute and wonderful reasoner demonstrates the existence, power, and benevolence of the Deity. "But God," he continues, "was not content with bestowing a body thus matchlessly endowed; he planted in man the greatest of his gifts, — a sovereign intellect fit to use the faculties of the body and rendering man like a god among the other beings of this world."

So he taught, and his death was as sublime as his doctrine. His faith in the goodness of God and the deathless nature of the soul, which the bowl of poison would set free, but could not injure, bore him up so serenely that Erasmus in the fervid admiration inspired by these undying moments of the dying man, exclaimed "*Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis*," — Saint Socrates, pray for us.

A question arises, Why did not this sublime philosophy, pure morality, and virtuous example have more vital and reformatory power over his times? Why were not the men who hung upon his lips transformed and renewed and made the centre of a new cultus of enlarging and deepening influence to change the heart of society and the face of the world? Among the most devoted hearers and admirers of Socrates was the profligate Alcibiades. Says this bad man, "When I listen to Socrates, my heart leaps and tears rush to my eyes. I have heard Pericles and other able orators, and I thought they spoke well; but I had no such feeling, my soul was not agitated, I was not held in thrall. I have been so moved by this Marsyas, that in my condition of soul life seemed not worth the having. I have felt towards him a sentiment which no one could suppose to exist in me, of mingled shame and respect. I know that duty requires me to obey his injunctions; yet the moment I leave his presence I am conquered by the applauses of the multitude. You understand not this man. Outwardly he is like the sculptured Silenus,—his speech is jesting and ironical; but within he is full of earnestness and the sweetest virtue, the very shrine of the Deity,—so divine, so wonderful, so beautiful, that I must need do whatever he commands."

It was the old difficulty ever renewed, the mind fired to admiration, the ideal exalted and shining aloft; and yet the will unsubdued, the passions uncleansed, and the character unchanged. The popular religion was not affected by these lofty moral and spiritual teachings of the philosophers, and kept on, the same degraded superstition. How degraded it was Theophrastus has described in the superstitious man, the representative of his times. Some of the marks which distinguish him are these: "If a weasel cross his path, he will not proceed till some one has gone before him, or until he has thrown three stones across the way. If he sees a serpent in the house, he builds a chapel on the spot. A mouse perchance has gnawed a hole in a flour-sack; away he goes to the seer to know what it behooves him to do; and if he is simply answered, 'Send it to a cobbler to be patched,' he views

the business in a more serious light, and, running home, he consecrates the sack as an article no more to be used. If on his walks an owl flies past him, he is horrorstruck and exclaims, 'Thus comes the divine Athene!' As often as he has a dream, he runs to the interpreter, the soothsayer, or the augur to inquire what god or goddess he ought to propitiate. Whenever he passes a cross-way, he bathes his head. For the benefit of a special purification, he invites the priestesses to his house, who, while he stands reverently in the midst of them, bear around him an onion or a little dog." Such were "the works of the law,"—the ceremonial law of the old Greek mythology,—whose thralldom, however, the ideas of the philosophers had no power to uplift, no power to push off by a newly-inspired life unfolding from within.

And the reason was, they *were* ideas abstractly reasoned from within and not DIVINELY GIVEN AND AUTHENTICATED FROM ABOVE. They came on the private recommendation of this person and that, the individual groping up towards heaven, and not heaven opening down upon man. The day-spring from on high lay not upon the hills of Greece. Socrates was a good man, and so was Jesus. Socrates taught a pure morality, and so did Jesus. Both taught a loftier theism than that of their times. Both drew crowds that hung upon their speech. Both were martyrs, and their martyrdom thrills the world forever. But Jesus was not only a man, but THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY. Not an abstract idea of God, but a divine humanity is revealed in him. Not discourings *about* God to men, but man put in living communion with God is the boon of Christ, and hence that new gift of the Holy Spirit, or God passing into the human soul to cleanse and renew it, which made the course of Christianity a continuous pentecostal scene. Socrates argued logically the doctrine of a future life,—Jesus exemplified it in the fact of his resurrection, rising out of the crumbled earthly habitation, and from the glorified state and in divine form, shining back through the interiors of men's minds and flooding them with the splendors of noon, thus making immortality a disclosed reality and brooding over them like the day. The day-spring from

on high *did* rest on the mountains and plains of Palestine. Hence, while Socrates was powerless to uplift the despotic ritual of the old mythology or breathe any life into it, the Jewish ritual, hardened and thickened in the Rabinnical incrustations of half a century, melts off and clears away before that coming of the Paraclete within the heart of the Church and thence of universal humanity through which the Christ creates all things new.

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WE do believe that the great change for which the secret religiousness of this age pines, and which it is sorely straitened till it can accomplish, is the deliberate adoption into "heavenly places" of this world, its faculties and affairs, just as God has made them, and man's unfaithfulness has not yet spoiled them.

It is not only the home of each man's personal affections, but the native country of his very soul, where first he found in what a life he lives, and to what heaven he tends; where he has met the touch of spirits higher than his own, and of Him that is highest of all. It is the abode of every ennobling relation, the scene of every worthy toil, — the altar of his vows, the observatory of his knowledge, the temple of his worship.

Whatever succeeds to it will be its sequel, not its opposite, will resume the tale wherever silence overtakes it, and be blended into one life by sameness of persons and continuity of plan. He is set here to live, not as an alien, passing in disguise through an enemy's camp, where no allegiance is due, and no worthy love is possible, but as a citizen fixed on an historic soil, pledged by honorable memories to nurse yet nobler hopes.

*Here* is the spot, *now* is the time, for the most devoted service of God. No strains of heaven will wake him into prayer, if the common music of humanity stirs him not. The saintly company of spirits will throng around him in vain, if he finds no angels of duty and affection in his children, neighbors, and friends. If no heavenly voices wander around him in the present, the future will be but the dumb change of the shadow on the dial. In short, higher stages of existence are not the refuge from this, but the complement to it; and it is the proper wisdom of the affections not to escape the one in order to seek the other, but to flow forth in purifying experiences on both. — MARTINEAU.

## HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

No. LXIV.

ZEUCH UNS NACH DIR, SO EILEN WIR.

Mel. Ach Gott. und Herr, Wie gross und schwer. Ludamelia Elizabeth; Gräfin  
von Scharzburg-Rudolstadt. gest. 1672.

Draw us to Thee,      So we shall flee,  
All eager, earnest-hearted,  
Where Thou art found,      O Christ, enthroned,  
Out from these scenes departed.

Draw us to Thee!      Ah, lovingly  
From low affections winning;  
That we, no more,      Be o'er and o'er,  
Our webs of trouble spinning.

Draw us to Thee,      Lord Christ, and be  
Our guide at every station;  
Else, lured aside      Or terrified  
From paths of thy salvation.

Draw us to Thee,      That following free  
Thy step to heavenly borders,  
The stir and roar,      Distress no more,  
Of this bad world's disorders.

Draw us to Thee,      To seek and see,  
Thy heaven of truth reflected;  
And oh, impart      The glowing heart  
That kindles thine elected.

The translator thinks to close here this desultory course of German Hymns. It was begun at the request of our distinguished organist, Mr. John K. Paine, as contribution to a musical enterprise that has not yet been completed. Most of the pieces were chosen on account of their peculiar measures, without any other principle of selection. If of no further use, they will, at least, have helped, with their half-mechanical occupation, to enliven the leisure of what might else have been heavy hours.

N. L. F.



## IS THERE ANY LIMIT TO MAN'S PROBATION?

## PART II.

SOME of the considerations bearing on this subject, derived from the urgency with which the Bible calls for action now, and the analogy of nature in its allotment of special times and seasons for all other work, have been already presented.\*

But, again, the very fact that man is placed in this present world at all is an argument for supposing there is an object to be accomplished here which no other state of existence could so well attain. Why is it that he is not sta-

\* Our good brother of the "Liberal Christian," in noticing the previous part of this article, raises the question whether man is on probation at all. It is a simple matter of experience and observation. A lad goes from the country to start in life amid the opportunities and temptations of a large city. It is uncertain beforehand whether he will use them for his benefit or his ruin; whether at the end of thirty years he will be a wealthy and respected citizen, or lie down diseased and wretched in a drunkard's grave. What are these years but his probation, the time in which it is to be tried and proved what he will do with the means before him? And this whole world, is it not a larger city in which we are all making a similar trial? Is not every man proving from day to day what he will be and do? Does not the very fact that in the beginning of life it is uncertain whether any particular person will succeed or fail, die a good or a bad man, make it inevitably a state of probation?

There is no antagonism between education and probation, as our friend seems to think, or even parallelism. Probation is simply the state in which it is tried whether or not man, as a free agent, will choose to be morally educated by the influences around him. The real question is not "whether he is capable of endless progress or not,"—for who doubts that he is?—but one which is far deeper and more difficult,—whether he will make that progress, whether he will use his capacities and opportunities to mount ever upwards, or abuse and neglect them, till finally they are stunted and destroyed by sin. The statement that "man is tried, but his trials are the text-books by which he masters the mysteries of being, and enters into his beatitude," is a begging of the whole question. *Will* he do it? *will* every human being make them conduce to his beatitude, that is the very thing to be proved. Man is not a passive subject developed by Deity alone, "like the cabbage and the oak," but a free agent made to have a voice and act a part, if he will, in his own development. Jonathan Edwards might consistently have denied that man is under probation, but no one can deny it who believes in moral freedom. We are afraid that our excellent brother, amid the multitude of capital things he gets into the "Liberal Christian" every week, has not had time to think this matter out into harmony with his other truth.

tioned at once in that spirit world which is his ultimate destiny? Of what use this little rim of earthly being to the great globe of eternity, this narrow shore of flesh to the boundless ocean of immortal life? How could a wise and loving Father have created him so far away from his final home and left him to struggle back, through sin and misery and toil and darkness and death, to the light of his own dear face? There is only one answer that can possibly be given to these questions, and that is that there is something in the circumstances of this earthly existence which is absolutely requisite for the development of the soul, and such as it can find nowhere else in the universe. It is the principle on which all other growth is conducted. Why is the flower, meant to bloom in the bright sunshine, planted to begin with as a seed in the soil? Why the butterfly, whose final home is to be among the flowers, forced to begin life as an insect crawling over the earth? Why the eagle, whose element is in the upper skies, not launched at once from its Maker's hand out into the broad heavens? Is it not because the soil is the only place where the seed can find its nourishment and germinate; because the condition of the butterfly as a worm is absolutely needed for the shaping and growth of its wings; because it is only in the warmth and narrow circle of its nest that the eagle can acquire that strength by which it can cleave the skies? It would be of no advantage for them to be transferred at once to their highest state of existence. The seed would dry up in the fulness of the sunshine, the worm have no enjoyment hovering over the garden of flowers, and the eagle launched out at once on the open heavens, fall and die. So with man. It would be an injury instead of a blessing for him to be placed at once in the full brightness of the divine abode. It is required that his soul should be planted, as it were, with its roots in the flesh, for the very purpose that it may grow up the better into the light of heaven. His earthly being is that chrysalis state in which he is to unfold the powers of his spiritual nature, and to acquire those faculties and tastes which can make it a glad

thing to revel in the bright gardens of Paradise. And this whole world, with all its storms and trials, its pains and pleasures, is but "the cradle and the nest" in which the soul is to gird around it that strength of faith and love by which alone it can mount up through the atmosphere of the spiritual heavens. The relation of the present earth to those stages or spheres of being, one or more, which are to come after it, is like that of a primary school to the other grades which rise above it. The primary school in itself considered is inferior to all the others. Its teachers are not so learned, its studies not so advanced, and its pupils less mature. Yet for the special work it was designed to do, that which relates to the beginning of education, learning the alphabet and figures and the outlines of geography, it is the very best that could be devised. The boy who neglects its lessons and thinks he will have a better chance to learn them when he gets up into the other grades, is making a woful mistake. Not only is he losing the discipline and knowledge which are imparted here, but, what is far worse, he is depriving himself of those very qualifications which are needed for his entering with joy and profit on the grade which comes next in order. It is fidelity in the lowest school which alone can furnish a preparation for those above it. His passing through it is a time of probation. And it is only so far as he uses it well that the others, even the highest, with all their privileges, can be of the least avail. So with the present earth. Its opportunities in themselves, are, doubtless, far inferior to those of heaven, and yet as affording the means of salvation and of starting in the spiritual life, there is just as little doubt that they are better. It is sometimes spoken of as a good thing that the soul is snatched away from its mortal life in childhood, before ever it has tasted the sorrows and trials of earth. The subject is one of great mystery, and in comparison with those cases in which a person's career is that of vice and infamy, it is hardly possible to question it is better to be cut off as an infant "in the smiles and beauty of its innocent age." But, as a rule, it

is a false logic which makes prematurity of death in and of itself more desirable than continuance of life. It is long life which is our normal destiny. Nature plans that every person should live at least his threescore years and ten. It is only in this period that he can come under all those influences with which earth is supplied. And of two persons who may reach heaven by these different ways, there is every reason to suppose the one who spends the whole circle of human life on earth and endures faithfully and triumphantly all its sorrows and trials, will have in eternity a loftier place, a richer and completer character, than the one who was snatched away as a child from all trouble and temptation, and placed at once in the spirit world. The perfection of nature is always better than the breaking and thwarting of her plans. The finest touches of character, the ripening and hardening of those precious fruits which have grown up in the soul during its youth and maturity, are often left to the sunny glory of age. It is the teachers and books of earth, inferior as they may be, that are best able to impart the rudiments of wisdom, the alphabet and numbers and geography of salvation. He who is taken away before they are completed, or allows them to pass by without use, must enter on the next sphere unprepared to enjoy its higher and richer opportunities. And the very fact that man has those higher and richer ones before him, the very fact that he is to pass out of this sphere into the next, suggests in itself that there is a limit to his time of probation.

The same truth comes to us again in the hardness and insusceptibility which age and the experience of life are continually producing in the soul. It is forgotten by those who consider that the work of salvation can be attended to in the future as well as in the present, that their natures do not, cannot remain in the same condition from day to day, but are so made as to grow, if not into virtue, then inevitably more and more into worldliness and vice. If the farmer waits till the middle of the summer before planting his seed, he not only finds that the season is less favorable for its germination,

but that the very soil itself is in a worse condition to receive it. The weeds have been at work during every day and every hour that his own hands were idle. The ground is matted together with roots and parched by the sun. The elements required for its nourishment have been sucked away, and the whole work of preparation is increased a hundred-fold. So with human nature. It is less and less adapted, with every year of neglect, to receive and nourish the seeds of virtue. Vices, whose germs were caught from the passing air—who can tell where they come from any more than what sows the myriad weeds of the field?—spring up in its soil. The freshness and wealth of feeling which belong to childhood are dried up. The roots of coarse and bitter passions thrud it through and through. And it is trodden down and hardened by the long tramp of a thousand worldly cares. Yea, it is a terrible fact that the higher and richer a man's opportunities are, the more hardening and deadening, if not improved aright, is their influence on the character. It is in the midst of Christian lands, in the full light of the gospel, that we find the worst crimes, the most hardened, unrepentant criminals. The world has never had such irreversible sceptics and unbelievers as some of the men who stood in the very presence of Christ, seeing his miracles, hearing with their own ears his words of wisdom. The souls which blaspheme against the Holy Ghost beyond all hope of forgiveness are the ones which have had the Spirit of God, some so near, so direct before them as to be conscious of him as a living person. You cannot increase a sinner's means of salvation without increasing, at the same time and in the same things, his means of deeper damnation. The gospel, which is not a savor of life unto life, is by its very nature a savor of death unto death. And unless the laws of man's being are entirely changed, increasing its opportunities, going to that world where it will know more of truth and duty and the light of God's Spirit, instead of making the soul sure of repentance, may only furnish it with the means to become more sceptical, more flinty, more blaspheming.

There is no hell to the wicked so deep, so fiery, so filled with all the possibilities of sin, as heaven itself.

But apart from this hardening of the whole nature, which comes from the influences around it, there is still another bondage which is thrown over the soul as it advances in life, and which tends yet more to limit its time of probation, — the terrible power of habit. We have some evidence even in this world of its insidious workings, its ever-increasing strength, and of what its end at last may be in actually outgrowing all power of the will. When a person begins the use of intoxicating drink, its enjoyment is a matter of choice, and it is not by any means a difficult task to break away from its allurements. But with every day of its use the strength of his appetite is increased, his power of resistance diminished. The fetters which he wore at first as a wreath of roses are hardened, little by little, into a chain of steel; and finally, the habit is fastened upon him with such force that, even though he should wish to do it, there is no power in him which is able to break away from its grasp. There is many and many a man who has found himself in this horrible bondage. The day of his probation was past. He had gone beyond the limit where it was possible for him to retreat. His strongest resolutions, his most sacred pledges, were broken at the first sight of the cup; and thenceforth the only thing which remained for him was a drunkard's grave. And there is a tendency the same way with all man's appetites, passions, tastes, actions, and ways of thinking, yea, even with his indolence and neglect, everything which goes to make up his worldliness and irreligion. Every time they are indulged in it is easier to do it, harder to refuse. He gets a certain momentum in his course, like a ball falling through the air, or a stone sliding down the mountain side, a cumulative force which only those who have tried its resistance can have any conception of. And, alas! so subtle, so wonderful, so inward-reaching is this power, that the longer he delays resistance the weaker is his desire of change, the more settled even the will becomes in its attitude of submis-

sion. How is it with the sinner as he advances in life? Is there anything in his earthly course to indicate that, with sufficient length of days, he may outreach the dominion of evil, fag it out by the mere power of living? Do we find, as a matter of fact, that the older a person grows the more likely he is to repent? Is it not notorious, that the greater part of all conversions take place with the young, and that after a man has reached his fiftieth year, the chances that he will make any important changes in his life are all against him? And what reason is there for supposing this tendency is to stop with death? Is there any power in the grave to wash out habits? If man is to carry the same good habits with him into the next world that he has in this, the same virtues and affections and upward tendencies, shall he not carry likewise the same bad ones? If every repetition of an act here renders it harder and harder to break away from its bondage, is there anything in human nature to make it different there? If the chances that a sinner will repent turn against him when he is fifty years old, is it likely they will be much in his favor when he is fifty thousand? Is it not probable, yea, according to the laws of his very being, must it not be, that the force of evil habit, growing stronger with the eternal years, will reach at last to every part of his nature, and be such that no effort of the will, even under all the motives that God can offer, will be able to break it? And what is this but arriving at the limit of probation?

This doctrine is yet further strengthened by what we know of the deadly and corrupting influence there is, deeper even than habit, in the very nature of sin itself. Our heavenly Father is very indulgent. He has given men constitutions that will suffer a vast amount of abuse. They can transgress his laws very far, can tread very deep in corruption, and yet such is the recuperative energy he has placed within them, if they stop in season, even though all cast down with disease, and repent and use the proper remedies, it is possible to be restored. But there is a point when the energy of nature, aided with all the power of will, is more



than matched by that of disease, and beyond which no soul can go. You see it in bodily sickness. The violation of natural law — breathing impure air, eating unwholesome food, giving loose reign to appetite and passion — may be indulged in for weeks and months and years, and yet, if a person then breaks off and obeys the law and uses the right medicines, the wounds will heal over and the body be restored to health. But there is a limit to this power of recuperation, varying with different persons, but which is fixed in all, and from beyond whose bourne no traveller has been able to return. If it is passed over, the seeds of disease are planted in the very vitals, and thence grow of themselves, for that seems to be the true nature of all disease, that of a vegetable growth, having a life independent of the proper vitality, predominating over and consuming the bodily powers. The use of medicine, the reformation of conduct, the obedience of laws, are then all in vain. The limit of probation is past. And though the body may linger along for a time, it grows weaker and weaker ; and, in spite of longings and cries and prayers, it sinks at last into the grave.

And is there not the strongest reason to believe that the same result is liable to take place with moral disease, with that which fastens on the soul ? It is disobedience in the same way, only of spiritual laws. God is merciful and forbearing, more so, if possible, than he is in natural transgressions. Men can wander long and far into sin ; can do it right in the face of his warnings and entreaties. And yet, if they turn to him, and repent and use his truth, the arm of his mercy is long, he reaches down into their degradation, — reaches to them standing on the very verge of the fatal river, and they are saved. But is there not a point here, also, beyond which even the soul cannot go and live, — an abyss of sin so deep as to be beyond the reach even of God's arm, — a vital point of the spirit where, if the disease is once seated, no entreaties, no truth is able to help it ? There are some phenomena of sin which are absolutely horrible, more so than anything that was ever painted in the most lurid Hell.

When its fangs are once fastened thoroughly on the spirit, it seems, like bodily disease, to have a life of itself. It feeds, grows, unfolds itself, displays a will of its own, becomes a live, hissing, writhing serpent, not in the body, but in the soul; has a distinct individuality, so that we can say with Paul, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." We do not wonder that evil has been personified as the Evil One. It is a subtle recognition in the human consciousness of its terrible nature, a truth about it which cannot be slurred over or reasoned down. And what hope is there when it has taken this form? Has not the soul reached its limit of probation? Could there be any more thorough handing over of itself to Satan? And though it may linger for years, though the point at which it falls may be far along in eternity, ages after the body has deceased, what can the end be but a consummation of that most significant of scriptural phrases, so awfully suggestive in its very vagueness,—a state of spiritual death.

These are some of the considerations which go to show that man's probation will not last forever. We do not say they are conclusive, do not say that the boundless goodness and mercy of God should not weigh powerfully on the other side. It is not a doctrine which it is pleasant to reach. The wishes, the prayers, the yearnings, and the hopes of the human heart are all against it. And there is no one who is conscious of his own weakness and shortness of sight, no one who has neighbors and brothers and children and parents yet in the bondage of sin, no loving heart which has laid down in the grave a form erring and unrepentant, yet clung to with a fondness beyond the reach of all logic, who can pronounce a formal decision on a question of such tremendous significance, or fail to hope, if not believe, that somewhere and somehow there will be found to every soul a place of repentance. But for all that, we cannot blind ourselves to the facts. They speak with terrible emphasis, write themselves out in the most horrible forms. And in view of all that they are, in view of all the mighty forces which we

know are at work within and around us, is it not the part of wisdom, yea, are we not pressed upon with motives of tremendous force, to use faithfully our present opportunities, and to accept now those offers of God's mercy and eternal sonship, which are held out so surely, so freely, so lovingly, to our grasp?

And while we look at the darker side of the matter, while we think of the terrible possibilities which persistence in sin unfolds, we would not forget, in closing, to glance at the bright side, — the end of probation which comes from a life of love and obedience. The present world is, indeed, even to the strongest and best of men, a scene of trial. The path of duty is not always that of pleasure, the desires and passions not always in harmony with the needs and principles. There is many a place where the soul, with all its aspirations, has to struggle hard with the world and vice and self. Dangers surround it; the way is dark; often it stumbles and falls; and there are long and weary hours when it doubts the end, — doubts if it will stand the trial and meet the approbation of God. But these will not last forever. The very same principles which tend to confirm the soul in sin, when it once has started in the downward way, operate with equal force to keep it in holiness the longer it treads in the path to God. The growths of virtue, like the tall shoots of wheat and corn in the depths of June, take away the light and nurture from the weeds of vice. A strength is laid up with each set of opportunities through which the soul passes, that enables it to take all the more advantage of the new ones which open before it. Right actions, desires, affections, and tastes, oft repeated, get endowed on their side with all the unbounded power of habit. Piety develops a life of its own, — that life which our Saviour came that his disciples might have and have the more abundantly, rich, thrilling, fair infinitely beyond that of the flesh. And the process goes on till the soul is confirmed in holiness beyond all possibility of falling away. The most terrible thing about evil, its power of temptation, is destroyed. There is no struggle,

no effort, no need of watch and guard to keep in the path of duty. Like a star, swift, strong, bright, and sure, it sweeps onward in its eternal course. And man's probation comes to its end, not by death, not arbitrarily, not by any violent transition of place, but naturally, sweetly, grandly, by its growth to a state of glory.

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### DREAMING AND WAKING.

BY CAROLINE A. MASON.

“Launch not thy bark  
In search of peace upon a boundless sea,  
Which has no ark,  
No dove to bring this olive-branch to thee.

“Oh, do not roam  
In quest of that which wandering cannot win;  
At home! at home!  
That word is placed, thy mouth, thy heart within.”

ALICE MAXWELL — young, literary, accomplished, and not unhandsome, withal — was the wife of a country clergyman. Her husband, the Rev. Herbert Maxwell, had accepted his first call, and was settled over a small but thriving society in the village of S—. There had been no time for the young minister, even if he had so wished, to beat about a dozen bushes in the way of candidating *ad libitum*, — flitting first to one parish and then to another, comparing the advantages of each, weighing the chances here and the chances there, — with a view to settling down at last into some easy nest, well lined, warm, and congenial. The truth was, Rev. Mr. Maxwell was in a hurry to become located, even though it might be indifferently well, in order that he might have a home to bring his young bride to. Circumstances more than warranted this seeming haste, for Alice had been left an orphan during the last year, and the need of a home was imperative to her. So, when the Rev. Herbert came to her one day —

having driven over to H—— for the very purpose — with a letter in his pocket containing his first call, both the young people decided to accept it on the spot. Not but that there were some little misgivings lest they might be making rather a rash thing of it; but then, it was a venture any way, no matter where they settled. So they said, — and, no doubt, they were right.

“One thing, Alice,” remarked Herbert, as he was about leaving her to prepare his answer, “I suppose you understand that you will find very few of the refinements of city life in S——. It will be a great change for you.”

He felt that he ought to say as much as this, perhaps more; but Alice, who saw everything just then *couleur de rose*, prevented what he would have added further by a little outburst of girlish enthusiasm, which completely overbalanced what he meant for a prudent reminder, appending to it, moreover, a shy intimation that with him she should miss nothing really desirable, and saying sundry other little pleasant things, with such a blushing, bashful confidence in herself and in him and in the all-sustaining, all-conquering nature of their affection for each other, that the young clergyman felt, for the moment, translated, and doubted not that a parish in Pandemonium, with Alice for a helpmeet, would be, on the whole, not so undesirable a locality as some tried to make out, but really quite a pleasant little place to settle in.

But with cooler moments came cooler thoughts; and it was a week before the important answer was written and sent. Meanwhile, Herbert had ridden in to H—— three times, had talked the matter over with Alice and Alice's Aunt Edith, with Dr. Hopeall and Deacon Stearns, and other good, substantial men, and had come to the conclusion that it was his duty to accept this call. Of course, he had made it a subject of prayer from the first; and, as he had brought the matter to his heavenly Master heartily and with a sincere desire for guidance, he felt inclined to accept all outward intimations of his duty as heaven-sent, as, no doubt, they were.

"Alice's letters get quite low-spirited in tone," said Aunt Edith to her husband, folding a letter from Mrs. Maxwell, received about a year after her marriage and her husband's settlement in S——. "I believe, George, if you can spare me, I'll go and make her a visit." She reopened the letter and handed it to her husband. He read it with a face that grew graver as he proceeded down the page.

"This doesn't sound much like our light-hearted Alice, I confess," he said, as he finished and handed it back to his wife. "Go, by all means. It is about as I feared, though I didn't say much at the time. Alice is out of her element, and she has discovered it; that is all. Maxwell's a good fellow, and she has reason to be proud of him; but they are both thrown away, there in S——. I said so, and I was right." Mr. Honeywell was apt to prophesy correctly. Some people are.

"Now, George, you needn't croak," said his wife, smiling, yet looking a little disturbed, notwithstanding. "Everything seemed to point out S—— as the place for Herbert, — everything but its being a country village, unlike what Alice had been used to. But you know she thought she shouldn't mind that. For one, I believe in a good Providence, — nay, a special Providence. I believe that if it had not been best for them, they would not have gone there. God orders our way, and it is we who are to blame when it seems otherwise than suitable for us to walk in. If I go to Alice, I shall be candid with her, and —"

"And persuade her," interrupted her husband, "that she isn't wasting her sweetness on the desert air, not at all; but that S—— is just the place for her elegant accomplishments and literary tastes to blossom in, and that — in short, that to be buried alive is a very desirable and enviable lot. Pshaw! — perhaps she'll believe it, but I don't! However, I have no objection to your going and saying what you please to her; but, for my part, I think she has just thrown herself away."

Mr. Honeywell was decidedly a man of the world, — a shrewd man of the world. So he thought himself, and,

probably, so others thought him; but his wife had that better wisdom which is from above; and, as her judgment was based on higher principles than his, her conclusions were apt to prove, in the end, more substantially correct than those to which he arrived. Yet the "I told you so!" so often on his lips, never fell from hers. In the case of Alice, it cannot be denied that she had shared in some degree her husband's apprehensions; but, looking at the matter uniformly from a higher stand-point than he had done, she had felt that a course so clearly pointed out by Providence as this seemed to be, was not to be disregarded and set aside merely from vague fears lest the sensitive nature of her niece Alice might not be proof against all the disagreeabilities of her chosen lot.

"Poor young thing!" she said to herself, "she has everything to learn, and who knows but that this may be the best school for her? Her short-comings and defects are all known to Him who orders her lot, and I can trust my darling to His wisdom and love, sure that He who sees the end from the beginning will bring all things right." Still, painful misgivings would sometimes visit her, especially after receiving a letter from Alice. Frequently these letters would be quite laughable in the reading of them, but they left a secret sting behind in the mind of the good lady. Little, grotesque accounts of some village gathering, droll descriptions of a morning call or evening visit from some bashful or would-be-genteel parishioner, with, perhaps, a short, bitter reflection thrown in by way of reminder of the still fondly-cherished associations and surroundings of her former life, before she was the Rev. Mrs. Maxwell and moved in the cultivated circle of city-bred people, herself the most fastidious and cultivated of them all,—these and other like glimpses into the real state of her niece's mind under such "inflictions," as Alice half laughingly, half complainingly called her new experiences of social life in S—, afforded Aunt Edith matter of painful doubt as to whether Alice were not positively unhappy in her position as a pastor's wife. But it was not until the letter came to which we have referred that her apprehensions took



definite shape and decided her to go to her niece. There was a tone of despondency running through it that startled her, and that was not at all neutralized by the gay postscript which Alice had penned at its close, probably by way of offset to her lugubrious epistle, thinking thereby to do away its legitimate effect upon the mind of its recipient. But Mrs. Honeywell was not to be blinded in this manner. "I shall go to her," she said, in her quiet, decided manner, as she folded the letter and laid it aside.

With Mrs. Honeywell, to resolve was to do. Accordingly, that afternoon's post (Wednesday) carried to her niece an intimation of her intention to visit her, and Friday evening beheld her safely arrived in S——, and seated cozily at Alice's fireside in the little library of the parsonage, an apartment pleasantly situated and looking out upon the village street.

"What a charming little room!" said Mrs. Honeywell, glancing around shortly after her arrival. "Just the right size for a library."

"Yes, aunt, so I think; but the good people here, when they came to assist in putting down carpets, and so on, almost demanded that I should make a bedroom of it, because it had always been used for that purpose ever since the house had been a parsonage. I scandalized two or three and offended half a dozen by preferring to use it as a library. I don't think they ever had an idea of the propriety of having one room in the house fitted up for books till we came. Oh, they are terribly primitive here, I promise you!"

Alice shrugged her shoulders and glanced at her husband deprecatingly. Mrs. Honeywell looked at him also, and was pained to see a troubled expression come over his face, all smiles a moment before at her welcome advent.

"Aunt Edith will find out all about us and them in good time, I dare say, Alice," he replied, "for I shall expect her to make a long stay now that she has actually come; so let us talk of something else to-night."

The "little cloud no bigger than a man's hand" — or, rather, a glimpse of it to that extent — was indicated to

Mrs. Honeywell's mind by this scene ; but she made no comment, and the evening passed away pleasantly and quickly, without any further influence from the baleful shadow evidently around both these young hearts, — a shadow which she could not but admit to herself to be darker even than she had feared.

" You have been quite fortunate, I should judge, Alice, in your selection of a domestic. She is a very neat, pleasant-looking girl," said Mrs. Honeywell the next morning, after Martha, Alice's sole help just then, had removed the breakfast things and left the room.

" Yes, she is neat and pleasant enough," answered Alice, arranging the chairs a little more *a la mode*, " but not equal, as a cook, to Sarah, who was here before her. Only think, aunt ! When we first came to S——, our ' help,' as they say here, expected to sit with us and eat with us. It is the custom, you know ; but of course I couldn't have it so, and I offended Sarah mortally the second week by requesting her to lay but two plates in future. She left on the spot ; and my husband wasted a whole day in finding some one to take her place. People here, too — that is, some of them — took exception to what they were pleased to call my ' high notions ;' but what else could I do ? Finally, Martha came, and we get along very well, — only she isn't much of a cook. But I had rather put up with that than with the other —" Alice was at a loss for a word ; finally, she added — " inconvenience."

" But, if it is the custom here, Alice, my dear," said Mrs. Honeywell, " would it not have been better to follow it, even at some expense of personal feeling, rather than to create an innovation unpleasant and unseemly to your husband's parishioners ?"

" Why, aunt !" said Alice, opening her eyes very wide, " you surely would not have me mixing myself up with all sorts of people ; would you ? — eating with my servants and making companions of them after this fashion ?" Alice's color deepened and her voice trembled a little.

"You overstate the matter, my dear," said Mrs. Honeywell, gently. "I would have you do nothing unbecoming or uncalled for; but I remember that our Saviour himself, when occasion warranted it, ate with publicans and sinners."

"Our Saviour did a great many things in his public ministry not incumbent upon us," answered Alice, a little hotly. "He washed his disciples' feet; but I do not know that we are called upon to do the same."

"That was purely an Eastern custom, and as such Jesus followed it, thereby teaching his disciples humility, — a lesson, Alice, which none of us learn too thoroughly, I am afraid, our life long. But I do not mean to be severe upon you, my love," observing that Alice was uneasy under her words. "You have been brought up with ideas utterly at variance with those of the people around you, and I should expect some clashing at first; but should you not make it your aim to avoid as much as possible all collisions with the parish that are not utterly matters of principle? You say that people here took your course in regard to Sarah unkindly. In that case, you doubtless excited more or less unpleasant and suspicious feeling towards yourself, and, perforce, towards your husband. Did you ever think, my dear, how much a minister's influence in his parish depends upon his wife?"

Alice gave a little start. "No, aunt, not particularly. I suppose, of course, it is desirable that people should like his wife and commend her actions in the main. But, Aunt Edith, I can't see that I was to blame in Sarah's case. Her presence at table was a constant annoyance to me. I couldn't say a word to Herbert of anything that had occurred while he was in his study or away on visits to the people; I was afraid to speak of any one in the parish or of any matter connected with them or with our own personal affairs, lest what I said should be carried where it might do harm, or should be misunderstood, or twisted into something different from the truth. And the only time I have to see Herbert and talk with him, for days together, is when we are at table. His time is so occupied by day, and his evenings are frequently so taken

up that night finds him too weary to talk,—and there it is!” added Alice, despondingly, and heaving a deep sigh that wanted but a trifle of developing into a hearty burst of tears.

“*Now* you are coming to a view of the subject that is sensible and reasonable,” said Mrs. Honeywell, with a cheerful smile, by way of sedative to her niece’s excited mood. “Why did you not put the matter to Sarah in that light, though not exactly in the same words? No well-disposed, reasonable girl could have seen the least objection to your request that but two plates should be laid when understanding the merits of the case as you have presented it to me. My dear, you have a great deal to learn. You are young and inexperienced, and you labor under the disadvantage of having been accustomed to very different social influences and customs from those which prevail here; in which case it is your duty to make those differences matter of prayerful thought, and to see how far, without sacrifice of principle and with a due regard to your own personal and social rights, you can accept the standard here and make it your own. Do you not see how, in this way, you may gradually win the confidence of the parish and eventually bring them up to an appreciation of all those finer amenities and courtesies of society which adorn without weakening the social system of country as well as city life? My child, there is a great work before you if you did but know it. To raise the people spiritually is your husband’s office; to elevate them socially, should be yours; but you cannot accomplish it by taking their prejudices by storm, as you seem to have done in this instance. There is an old saying, subject to some limitations I allow, but which we are all obliged to accept in some form, wherever we are: ‘When in Rome, do as the Romans do.’”

“Or, as some one has rendered it,” replied Alice, with a little nervous laugh, “‘When in Turkey, do as the Turks do;’ but, for one, pardon me,—but I have no desire to follow so questionable a precedent, and cry ‘Gobble, gobble,’ all my days because my neighbors do!”

It was a miserable little joke; but Alice felt that she must

say something absurd or lose her self-control altogether. She was in that excited state between laughing and crying which most lady readers will understand; her aunt's words had struck too close home to be parried by reasoning, and so she had resort to the ludicrous element strongly inherent in her nature. But it would not do, and she was glad to catch sight of the market-cart just then, and hurry out of the room to give Martha directions pertaining to a selection for dinner. If she had stayed a moment longer, she would have burst into a paroxysm of tears, shocked and pained good Aunt Edith, and revealed her own miserable weakness and unhappy state. This, she felt, would not answer at the outset of her aunt's visit.

"No, I must wear the mask a little longer," she said to herself, going to her own room immediately after her errand to the kitchen. "It is too bad to inflict my troubles upon aunt so early. Dear, dear! she will find out about them full soon enough. It is true, what Uncle George said. I have made a great mistake in — No, I don't mean that. I am not sorry I married Herbert; but I wish, oh, I *wish* we had never come here!"

A gush of tears followed this passionate little outburst — poor thing, she pitied herself so much! — after which timely relief, Alice went to her wash-stand and carefully removed all traces of emotion from her face. The remainder of the day she was sparkling and lively, a little too much so for her aunt's liking, for the effort made in that direction was but too apparent to the keen perceptions of the latter, though a stranger would not have noticed it.

Thus, several days passed on, Alice keeping up appearances, as she thought, — a task not hard in her aunt's congenial and lively society. She experienced, now and then, keen pangs of regret or apprehension, as the case might be; of regret, when reminded by Mrs. Honeywell's refined and cultivated manner of her former surroundings when "in society," as she termed her position before marriage, and of apprehension when she anticipated in thought her relative's

departure, and pictured her own return to the insipid routine of country life. But, in the main, she preserved a cheerful deportment, only relapsing, now and then, into the sadness which had become almost habitual to her before her aunt's coming. These moments of depression, however, and an occasional irritation of manner not natural to Alice, were enough to convince Mrs. Honeywell that all was not right, and she determined to take the first opportunity of conversing with Herbert in relation to the matter. She could see that he was not happy, and she attributed it to its right cause, — his wife's want of congeniality with the people of his charge, engendering, besides minor evils, a distance between them and her, which, by an inevitable law, removed himself, also, from them, causing, thereby, a perceptible diminution of confidence and regard towards him on their part. Of the people Mrs. Honeywell herself had seen but little. Alice had told no one of her expected coming, and though her appearance at church on Sunday had notified them that there was a stranger at the parsonage, very few had called in consequence. Of these few, one young lady had arrested her attention, as considerably above the average, both in manner and education. This was a Miss Church, residing with a widowed mother a little out of the village. Towards this young lady Mrs. Honeywell had felt considerably attracted, but in speaking of her afterward to Alice, she only yawned and said, —

"Yes, Miss Church is more ladylike than any one I have yet seen in S——; but, aunt," she added, "did you notice what vulgar-colored gloves she wore, and how she blushed when I introduced her?"

"My dear, these are trifles," Mrs. Honeywell had replied; but Alice laughingly insisted that trifles like these indicated a lady or the reverse; and here the conversation had dropped.

One evening Alice had gone early to bed with a headache; Herbert was away at a lyceum committee meeting, of which he was chairman, and Mrs. Honeywell was in the library, in a sort of reverie, from which she did not care to be disturbed by calling for lights. It so happened that the meeting to

which Herbert had gone was postponed, and he returned almost immediately. His first visit was to his wife, whom he found inclined to sleep. Coming into the library, he threw himself wearily into an arm-chair, and, unconscious of Mrs. Honeywell's presence, drew a deep sigh.

"Poor Alice!" he murmured, "I wish she were happier! Yes, we must leave S——; there is no other way."

Mrs. Honeywell's first impulse was, if possible, to steal unobserved from the room, for she felt an instinctive repugnance to announcing her presence after this disclosure, so unwittingly made, of her nephew's feelings. But on second thought, she decided to remain and seize the opportunity thus offered for the conversation she desired with him. She arose from the sofa, and the rustle of her dress made Herbert start and turn around. Coming up to him, she laid her hand tenderly upon the young man's forehead.

"Herbert," she said, in her gentle, motherly tones, "do not be disturbed that I have been witness, though unintentionally, to this expression of your feelings. You must be aware that I have more than suspected the nature of the trouble to which you just gave utterance, and though I have no desire to thrust myself uninvited into your confidence, I feel that my interest in you and Alice and in everything which pertains to her welfare and yours, together with what has just escaped your lips, warrant me in asking for a candid explanation, or rather discussion, of this matter between us."

Herbert did not answer immediately. He was evidently struggling with some emotion which almost unmanned him. At length he spoke:—

"Aunt Edith, you do not know how gladly I welcome your confidence at this juncture. I should have spoken to you soon, at all events, and I am not sorry that you have witnessed my weakness, if so it may be called, since it gives you a clew to my feelings which otherwise I should have withheld. Aunt, we must leave S——. Alice is miserable here. You have no idea of her unhappy state before you came. She is comparatively cheerful now, but I dread—you cannot tell how much



I dread — the reaction which will follow your departure. My heart is all but torn asunder in the struggle between my duty to my wife and to my people. If I stay, Alice's happiness — not to mention my own domestic peace and comfort — must be the forfeit. If I go, I incur the charge of fickleness and unfaithfulness to my implied agreement with the society, which was, to remain here somewhat permanently, under certain conditions, which they stand ready to fulfil. Thus, as you see, in leaving, I run the risk of losing the confidence of the parish, and perhaps of the denomination generally. Moreover, I have nowhere to go. I have not dared to announce myself as a candidate to any other pulpit. I find myself in a labyrinth of doubt and perplexity which unfits me for a proper discharge of my duties in public, and which makes my home, instead of the sweet shrine of domestic happiness which I fondly expected it to be, a place almost of torture. Do not think that I blame Alice," he continued, observing that Mrs. Honeywell's face took on a look which he interpreted as expressing the feeling of displeasure, which he deprecated on Alice's account. "She has been brought up so differently, and the surroundings here are so uncongenial to her tastes that —"

"That she is blindly — I do not say wantonly — sacrificing the good of the parish and her husband's peace, to say nothing of her own happiness and usefulness as a Christian and a pastor's wife, to a sinful craving after a life of ease and elegance elsewhere!" broke in Mrs. Honeywell in her calm, clear voice, electrifying Herbert, who sprang from his seat and raised his hand with an imploring gesture towards his aunt.

(To be concluded in next number.)

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"TRUTH! God alone sees it. What will be said, what will be thought, on high? therein consists truth. It consists in imagining things as God and the holy see them, as we see them beyond the world, when we cast thither our eyes. We see nothing in its true light, unless we see it from above. We should be able to say, That is true on earth, and it is true in heaven."

## OUR COMMON GROUND.

It has been often said by those opposed to Unitarian Christianity that, "it is good as far as it goes." I cannot but think that many who may have formerly used this expression in regard to Unitarians are not going so far themselves in these days as their fathers went. I have never been so impressed with this belief as within a few weeks past.

It was my good fortune, not long since, to attend an installation service in an Orthodox church; and that occasion, together with what preceded and what followed it, has convinced me that there is a wide common ground between many of the so-called Orthodox and a large portion of our own body. Those of us who, in the language of Henry Ware, Jr., do not abjure all creeds, "but have thrown away *every creed but the Bible*," would have heard in the services I refer to almost nothing which did not receive their honest and cordial assent.

In the first place, I attended the council, which, I was told, by a member beforehand, would be public. I shall, therefore, violate no confidence in saying what I here do, and that I was richly paid for being present at the examination of the candidate. True, he avowed the old creed of their church as his own profession of faith; and yet, in the progress of his answers to questions put to him by the ministers and their delegates, he followed principles of biblical interpretation much in advance of those avowed by his church a half-century ago. On the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures, for example, he discriminated between the historical portions and the rest, admitting that it required no special inspiration in a writer to record what he had seen with his own eyes, or what had come to him by tradition or history. He was asked if there were, in his opinion, any errors, either in the original or in our version of the Bible. He replied, he thought there were some slight errors, but that they did not affect any fundamental doctrine or truth of religion.

"And how did these errors get into the Bible?"

"They might have come," he replied, "from accidental mistakes of those who copied the Scriptures in the original, or through the inadvertence of the translators."

But, if this be so, what becomes of the old doctrine of the *literal* inspiration of the Scriptures, or, indeed, of their plenary inspiration, if that phrase covers every part of the volume, biography, history, and tradition, as well as its peculiar and vital principles of faith and salvation?

One of the interrogators, a layman, mingled with his questions to the candidate many comments and opinions of his own. He asked if Adam, before his transgression, differed essentially from us? Intimating that, if he had been holy and perfect, he would not have yielded to the very first temptation. In regard to the doctrine of Election, he inquired of the candidate whether a part of the race were fore-ordained to salvation without any regard to their own character and conduct. To believe this, he continued, seemed to him contrary to the justice of God. And he spoke of some views as "conflicting with common sense."

Surely, if this be the position taken by some of our Orthodox brethren, although *we* may "not go far enough," they do not go so far as their fathers; and we may rejoice in the ground common to us and them.

When we came to the installation, the services were, as a whole, such as any believer in the Lordship of Jesus Christ could cordially unite in. Christ was seldom referred to, except as in a verse of one of the hymns then sung, in his relations to man:—

"We bid thee welcome in the name  
Of Jesus, our exalted Head;  
Come as a servant, so he came,  
And we receive thee in his stead."

The sermon was mainly practical, avoiding, one would imagine, studiously, most controverted points. It defended earnestly—which I was glad to hear—the miraculous element of Christianity, and spoke of Christ as clothed with all power

by God, and wielding the influences of the Spirit. But the main topic was Christ as a preacher to the poor, laying the foundation on which the great spiritual philanthropies of the gospel and its equalizing and fraternizing works had been since built.

I embraced an early opportunity to hear the new minister himself; and if I had been gratified with the liberal tone of the installation services, every word was now in harmony with them. The manner of the preacher, let me first say, was pleasing and attractive. His voice was agreeable and well-modulated, and his whole bearing modest and refined, and yet full of earnestness and decision. The style of the discourse was simple, transparent, familiar, and at the same time cultivated, and it bore the marks of sound scholarship.

The subject, Paul's conversion, led, naturally, to an eloquent description of the history and character of Saul of Tarsus; and from that to a treatment of the great topic of conversion. "From what was Paul converted?" He had been a Jew, a Pharisee of the strictest order; and, as such, he was, first, a thoroughly moral man, no spot or blemish rested on his character. He was not, therefore, converted from immorality. Secondly, he was a religious man, worshipping the God of his fathers with profound devotion, and punctual in every duty of his own church. He was not, then, converted from irreligion to religion. The change was simply a turning to Christ. Before, he had hated and opposed him; now, he is converted, moves towards him, embraces him with his whole heart, lives unto him, and, finally, lays down his life for his Master. This is the conversion we all need. Until, like Paul, we take Christ for our Lord and Master, we may be moral men, perhaps, in some sense, religious men, but we cannot be Christians. To this view I could but utter a heartfelt amen.

Let me here say, that the preacher did not once, as far as I recollect, speak of Christ as the very God himself, but always as "the Son of God." What special interpretation he gave in his own mind to that phrase, whether he considered it equivalent to calling Christ the Supreme Being, of course, I

cannot judge. I am not concerned to know his metaphysics of that doctrine, what his private views may be of the "hypostatic union." I cannot go behind his language to seek out some occult meaning of it; but this I say, that, confining himself, as he did, to the Scripture phraseology, never saying or intimating that he placed Jesus Christ in any other rank than he placed himself, when he over and over took the name of "Son of God," I could not dissent from the position he avowed in his sermon.

Doubtless, many of the congregation, when they came to an interpretation of this phrase, would have disagreed somewhat among themselves as to the precise significance of the words "Son of God." One would regard them as implying that the Son was "the same in substance and equal in power and glory" to the Father. Another would probably so modify this exposition as to show himself a Sabellian, and not a Calvinist in his views of Christ. While a third, discharging the application of the term second *person* in the Trinity to Christ, would have shown himself a Trinitarian only in some modern sense.

I could not but express my satisfaction with these services to some of the congregation. I spoke of the catholic temper of the minister, which pervaded his devotional exercises no less than the sermon. The reply of one was, that this pleased him; he had heard not long since a discourse full of harsh and denunciatory language, which he disliked very much. I told him I was a Unitarian, but I rejoiced to honor the Son as well as the Father, and regarded him in the same light as his minister that morning had presented him, as "the Son of God."

"Your denomination differ, some of them, I believe, from this view?"

I replied, it was true, and I regretted that difference. He then spoke with great respect of the former pastor of the West Church, in Boston, as a serious and earnest preacher, whom he was glad to hear. But from those who denied the miracles of Christ, he most earnestly dissented.

Speaking to another individual of the same society, on a subsequent day, of those services, as meeting my cordial approbation, he answered, that the discourse I heard did not differ in its tone and spirit from some dozen others to which he had listened. They were all on broad ground, and had nothing offensive or sectarian in them; "and," he added, "I think your denomination have now a golden opportunity of doing good, if they will keep on the old foundation where Channing and Henry Ware stood." I was delighted, no less than surprised at this remark. It showed that the disposition to meet on that common ground where the Church shall "hear none but Christ" is not confined, as some imagine, all to one side. There are many who call themselves Orthodox, and still would rejoice, I believe, in seeing our prosperity so long as we honored and followed the Master. They do not forget the rebuke of that Master to those disciples who would cast out another, working in Christ's name, because he did not follow them. They have a liberal spirit, and are willing to recognize the true Christian wherever he may be found.

I am glad always to hear a preacher of this temper. We may differ in some of our speculations and theories; but there is much in which we honestly agree. I am glad also to see occasionally in our Magazine articles from those of other denominations. They not only demonstrate a unity of spirit, but they present sometimes views in which I can fully accord. It is good to look each other in the face whenever and wherever we can; to lay aside prejudice, and never let a mere name exclude us from hearing or reading the truth.

If we would get good ourselves, we must be willing to receive it from every Church that takes Christ for its Lord and Master. What we do not believe we can easily pass over; what we do believe, let us generously admit to our own minds and hearts. Give us a positive faith; I am tired of negation and denial. I long to see a love of Christ so abounding and so earnest, that it shall constrain us all to say, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?"

Here is to be our common ground. We shall never think precisely alike; but we may feel alike. And I care little for the name or the seat, so it can wake men up to a personal love of God and a broad love of man. We need organizations in our several churches for the study of God's truth, as made known in the Bible, in Providence, and in our own souls. We ought to be learners as long as we live. But beyond this, and more than this, we need practical religion. Loyalty to Christ will arouse us from our present spiritual lethargy, and bring us, one and all, into a fellowship with the Father and the Son. Here is room, not only for us Unitarians by name, but for every form of Christian faith. This is to be the magnet which will draw together believers of every creed and persuasion. When we gaze unitedly and intently on our divine Leader and Commander, the Church militant will no longer fight each other, but fraternize. Then God, the Father, will send his Holy Spirit through Christ; and it will gush forth, and flood rank upon rank, until, even here on earth, the Church militant, trampling down sin and death, shall enjoy a prevision and a rich experience of the Church triumphant.

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#### RUE-LEAVED ANEMONE.

UNCONSCIOUS little innocent!  
The only charm that is not lent  
To thee, by Nature, is the grace  
Of blushing at my earnest praise.  
The sun more fondly smiles to see  
This wooded knoll, because of thee.  
These trees refrain a shade to cast,  
Until thy time of bloom be past.  
And birds renew their tuneful mirth,  
To see thee bursting from the earth.

At first thy little head peeps out,  
With purple leaves well wrapped about,



Fearing lest April suns may be  
Still constant in inconstancy,  
And lest late snow, or wintry rains,  
May chill the blood within thy veins.  
Then taking courage, day by day,  
As April still gives place to May,  
The wrappers thou dost all unfold,  
No longer purple with the cold,  
And show thy beauty to the sky,  
The joy of every passer-by.

Thy petals, delicate and fair,  
The gentle grace that marks thine air,  
Thy leaf so neat, and stem so frail,  
Thy charms uncounted cannot fail,  
All unobtrusive as thou art,  
To catch the eye and win the heart.

Yet let me not presumptuous be,  
Or think it possible for me  
To tell the reason that my flower  
Has over human hearts such power.  
No outward eye can beauty see,  
An inward sense alone can be  
Percipient of its heavenly glow;  
Nor can the understanding know  
The secret causes that impart  
The sense of beauty to the heart.

Rue-leaved anemone! who knows  
Why thou art dearer than the rose  
To me, and why no other flower  
Can move my heart with half thy power?  
Perchance a subtle law may bind  
Some idiosyncrasy of mind  
In me with thy peculiar form.  
Perchance it may my bosom warm  
Toward thee, because in thee I trace  
Some likeness to the human face,

And thou within my heart may share  
The place of child or woman fair.  
Perchance the secret lies too deep  
For conscious scrutiny ; where sleep  
A thousand long forgotten hours,  
Beyond our recollection's powers ;  
Yet tinging with their joys or woes,  
The feelings' current, as it flows ;  
And he who would the secret tell,  
Why I should love this flower so well,  
Those hidden memories must find  
Which secretly its beauties bind  
To those who, long since, through the tomb,  
Sought flowers of amaranthine bloom.

O hallowed Power within me ! still  
My heart with thoughts of loved ones fill ;  
And let each flower of coming spring  
A charm around their memory fling.  
My childhood's innocence restore,  
Its faith and hope, for evermore.

Z.

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THE MOTHER.

MOTHER ! revere God's image in thy child,  
No earthly gift thy parent arms enfold,  
No mortal tongue as yet the worth hath told  
Of that which in thy bosom, meek and mild,  
Rests its weak head. Oh, not by sense beguiled,  
Gaze on that form of perishable mould.  
Though first by thee it lived, on thee it smiled,  
Yet not for thee existence must it hold ;  
For God's it is, not thine. Thou art but one  
To whom that happy destiny is given  
To see an everlasting life begin,  
To watch the dawnings of the future heaven,  
And to be such in purity and love  
As best may fit it for the realms above.

## A MAY-DAY SERMON.

BY REV. A. P. PEARBODY, D. D.

"As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth." — Isaiah lxi. 11.

I CANNOT regard the analogies which we are fond of tracing between the outward and the spiritual world as mere rhetoric or mere fancy. So far as external nature manifests the attributes of God, the tenor of his will, the tone of his administration, it interprets or confirms facts and laws in the more hidden realm of mind and character. On a day which from time immemorial has been celebrated by festival and song as the year's birthday, we may well take our lesson from the phenomena of awakening life that are all around us.

How suddenly, and how entirely without any display of adequate causes, is the face of nature renewed, and the hope of the year called forth! But a few days ago snow lingered in sheltered nooks; we have had frosty nights and chilly days; of atmospheric heat we have hardly begun to feel the genial power: — yet the quickening impulse has heaved the whole surface of the teeming earth, and is elevating the life-tide that pours through unnumbered conduits of root and branch, twig and flower-stalk; the maple-blossoms have summoned the bees from their winter's sleep; the arbutus sends up the earliest breath of incense from the turf; the white star of the anemone peeps from the sod; and the resurrection-fiat sweeps over the whole expanse of field and forest. And the fiat was first heard in the depths of the late rigid ground. Before we felt released from the grasp of winter, there was a yielding in the frozen soil, there was a genial warmth from beneath. The sap stirred first in the lowest roots, and the earliest tokens of renewed life were sent up from those deep-probing fibres of the ancient trees. Yet the impulse came from the heavens, from the higher meridian altitude of the sun, the fuller flood of light, the lengthening days, the shortened

distance of their luminary from the northern tropic. From the heavens to the depths beneath, to the lowermost extremities of the roots, to the springs and the subsoil which they soften, to the capillary and untraceable threads of vital moisture that run beneath the surface, saturated with nutritive elements; thence upward in each successive stage of growth, bloom, and fruitage, — such is the course of every ripening sunbeam, of every fertilizing drop of rain and dew, so that the gorgeous beauty of midsummer and the loaded harvest of grain-field and orchard will all have come down from above and up from beneath.

The reason why this process of growth is so still and silent is that it is not in any sense superficial, — that its work is all wrought above and beneath our clear cognizance. Yet it is the most stupendous development of the divine might that presents itself to our observation. Earthquake, tornado, seaswell, avalanche, clashing thunderbolts, bear no comparison with it in magnitude and intensity. It is not in the power of numbers to denote or convey any idea of the upward pressure of swelling germs and bursting seeds and mounting sap, which at this season constitutes the multitudinous life-throb of the whole northern hemisphere. It is, indeed, a power which "cometh not with observation." It is gradual, noiseless, unobtrusive. Its type is the still, small voice of the prophet's vision. But in it are "the hidings of His power." From these phenomena now presented to the outward vision, I propose to draw a few obvious illustrations of the spiritual and Christian life.

"Silent," "quiet," "unobtrusive," "of gradual growth," "coming not with observation," "known only to the soul and its God," — these are terms and phrases often applied to personal religion, and often applied, it seems to me, in a not over-religious spirit, with the view of repressing zeal, allaying solicitude, encouraging negligence and indifference. Because the religious life is of gradual growth, many argue that it has begun to grow in themselves, though it might require a microscopic vision to discern its beginnings. Because it

comes not with observation, they lay claim to it for the express reason that no observer could suspect them of it. In fine, you will find that very many fail to recognize their own destitution of the spirit and power of religion, simply because the kind of imagery which I have cited has given them the idea that true religion has little about it that is likely to be felt or noticed. Then, too, not a few imagine that, except the absolutely vicious members of society, all are on the right and safe side, and on the way to heaven, only at different stages of development; while, in fact, the spiritual life of many estimable persons is what the life of vegetation was three months ago,—mere capacity and ice, congealed sap, frozen leaf-buds, germs that had not even begun to grow. Let it, then, be clearly understood that,

1. As the quickening impulse for vegetation must come from the heavens, from the sun's more direct and intense influence, so must the religious life have its awakening from God, from the soul's communion with him, from his influence upon the soul. When it was said of Saul of Tarsus, "Behold, he prayeth," then, and not till then, was the apostle born out of the persecutor; then, and not till then, began to grow the pure and noble life which is the wonder and glory of the Christian ages. We may practise the civic and social virtues, we may have a glow of kindly and even of reverential feeling, without anything in our characters that is distinctively religious. And while we are in this state, it is vain for us to depend for future religious attainments on the natural growth of the religious element; for there is nothing in us to grow, nothing which does not easily reach its full growth, nothing which does not partake of the limitations of its earthly origin and nurture. Such a character may be as perfect in youth as in age. Nay, I think that it is more likely to be tarnished than to be brightened by time, as it becomes incrustated by selfishness, or its beauty is worn plain and coarse by contact with the evil that is in the world.

But let the soul by sincere prayer diminish the spiritual distance and discrepancy between God and itself, bring the

Divine Spirit near, draw the Sun of Righteousness towards the zenith of its own meridian, — then there is an immediate and vital action on all the germs of the spiritual life. Rays of divinity pour down upon the soil of the heart. There shoot forth, beneath their warmth, the love of God, tender, fervent, self-devoting, an earnest craving for the divine guidance, a sensitiveness of conscience unknown before, a solemn feeling of responsibility, new filaments of kindred with man, fresh energy for duty, a holy hatred for all that is evil. These elements of character may, indeed, not make their *appearance* at once, nay, a self-devoting consciousness may fail to detect their *presence*; but they are there, they have begun to grow, and, once started, they have the power of indefinite growth, — they have in them the fruitage of lengthened years and the harvest-sheaves of heaven.

Here, then, is one most important point for our self-examination. Is the connection established between our souls and God? Has the winter of our alienation passed, and the spring of his genial shining in upon our souls begun? Are we conscious of the warm and gladdening rays of his presence? Do we sincerely and habitually pray? And does prayer bring to us its revenue of satisfaction, peace, and joy? If this be the case, and we yet feel that our Christian character is still but imperfectly formed and faintly developed, we may then fittingly derive comfort from the necessarily gradual growth of the Christian life, — we may rehearse to ourselves the parable, “First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear;” for in that case the blade is formed, the ear is in hopeful embryo, the growth has begun, to be consummated in God’s good time, unless wantonly blighted by our shutting out the sun-rays, by our withdrawing from the spiritual communion which we had sought, by our discontinuance of the exercises of devotion.

2. In the spiritual as in the material world, the heavenly influence acts directly, not upon the surface, but on what lies beneath. Thoroughly as it reforms, outward reformation is not its immediate aim. Though it consigns to the fire all the

branches of the tree of evil, its axe, instead of hacking at them, strikes below them, at the very root. The principle of evil, various as it is in its manifestations, is one in its source. It is the substitution of the individual will for the divine will, the setting up of an independent government instead of that rightfully supreme. On the other hand, the germ of the religious life is the consecrated will, the determined choice, the comprehensive resolve, "I will serve the Lord." This is the first result of God's renewing grace, the initial answer to the effectual prayer, the token of the new birth into the kingdom of heaven. There may be external reformation without this, though it is more likely than not to be a reformation merely in appearance, or of brief duration, or the changing of one bad habit for another. Inward renewal may, on the other hand, coexist in its early stages with great deficiencies and faults of character; but, if it be genuine, these faults will be perpetually diminishing, these deficiencies will be progressively supplied, and there will be an advance in the manifestation of character as perceptible, and proportionally as rapid, as will be made in the now springing vegetation around us between the thin leafage of to-day and the green luxuriance of midsummer or the golden wealth of autumn. You may then be a Christian, and yet have much in your habits that needs to grow better; but you cannot be a Christian without the will which comprehends in its purpose, its aim, and its ever more and more successful endeavor the uprooting of all that is evil and the established reign of all that is good. For,

3. The Christian life, like that which the spring inaugurates, from beneath and within works upon the surface, and tends to create every form of obedience, virtue, charity, self-denial, endurance and achievement, which Providence demands and the disciple can render. "The harvest is the end of the world," or rather of life in the world, and so long as it remains unreaped, the process of ripening must be going on, all through the summer, under the dense leafage of the busy and happy prime, — all through the autumn, under the thinned



leafage and chill air of approaching winter. The Christian should never feel that he has attained his measure, or done his work. He recedes from his high calling, when he ceases from the endeavor to grow more like the One all-perfect, — when he no longer sees before himself a model to be more thoroughly copied, a faultless excellence to be more nearly approached, a divine beauty of holiness to be more entirely realized and embodied in his own spirit and life.

This will appear when we consider, more in detail, what there is for us to do and to become. First, if we have formed characters in which the love and will of God have not borne a prominent part, it is hardly possible that we should not have contracted some habits that need to be wholly laid aside, and others that require to be remodelled and to a great degree changed. Then there is a range of expressly religious duties, in which our negligence or coldness must be replaced by constancy and fervor. Then our social relations are by this new life exalted and enlarged. There are forms of religious forethought, effort, and charity, of which those nearest to us must be made the objects. There are the unprivileged and the sinning, to whom, according to our position and ability, we have an express message and charge from God. There is a reign of truth and righteousness, in the establishment of which we are called to be active, diligent, and earnest. Above all this, there are mild, gentle, passive, yet most intensely efficient elements of character, the varieties of which are almost numberless, and the degrees of which range from the very lowest to what we behold in the divine example of our Saviour. There is meekness, patience, submission, humility; there are the higher summits of devotional feeling and attainment; there is a nearness of communion with Jesus, a tender susceptibility to every movement of the Divine Spirit, and to every forthputting of the divine benignity; there is a life in close converse with things unseen, and in intimate fellowship with heaven: — and in all these things the Christian soul may mark its progress from year to year, may manifest more and more of the outward excellence

of sainthood, and may at the same time constantly accumulate that wealth of the hidden life whose fulness is entirely beheld only by its God and its Redeemer. Thus may and must there be a perpetual growth of the spirit that has been truly touched by the divine influence, that has heard in its depths the awakening voice and felt the renovating power of redeeming love.

4. In close analogy with the quiet processes of nature now in progress, the religious life is a great work, — the most potent and efficient exercise of the divine almightiness of which man is ever made the object. Silent and gradual though it be, it is a momentous change that takes place when one becomes sincerely a Christian. Before, he was the subject, the easy victim of outward influences; his happiness depended on sublunary things; he was a parasitic hanger-on upon such earthly vines as would bear his weight, a memorial of their frailty and feebleness in his frequent disappointments and griefs. Now, he is his own and God's, independent of things outward, with self-sustaining principles, with sources of happiness too deep for earthly loss or sorrow to reach them, grafted into the vine of eternal strength, freshness, and fruitfulness, whose fertilizing current forms the circulation of his whole moral nature. He was of the earth, earthly, and his gravitation was dust to dust; now he is of heaven, heavenly, and there are attractive influences constantly drawing him upward, spirit to the Father of his spirit. Let not, then, the idea of a silent and gradual work diminish; let it, on the other hand, only enhance and exalt our sense of the nobleness of the Christian calling, the essential greatness of the Christian character, the vastness of the obligation that rests upon us, if, through God's grace, we can call that character our own. It is no less than passing from darkness into God's marvellous light, from death unto life, from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

If these things be so, it becomes those of us who think that we are Christians to feel our responsibility for the impressions made by ourselves upon others as to the magnitude

of the Christian calling and salvation. We are some of us prone, I will not say over-prone, to deprecate everything like display or sanctimony with reference to religion. We rightly feel that whatever has the aspect of ostentatious profession or artificial show will be set down to the charge of hypocrisy. But are we not more earnest to avoid all this, than to honor our religion by testing and developing its full power in our own characters? If we are Christians, we ought to show ourselves so in every word and deed,—in our business, by an integrity beyond reproach and a meekness beyond disturbance,—in our homes, by unruffled gentleness and unwearied love,—in society, by the simplicity, sincerity, and kindness of our words, the candor and hopefulness of our judgments, the heart-coined courtesy of our whole intercourse,—in the church of God, by our constancy in its ordinances, our diligence in its charities, our faithful ministry for its enlargement and prosperity. Such lives would win souls. They would show a divine influence in forms which could not be misunderstood. They would indicate a power working with and in us, in which those around us could not but desire to participate. Thus may we build upon the walls and enlarge the borders of our Zion, restore her waste places, and offer in unison with our formal supplications our acted and effectual prayer for her peace and prosperity.

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“THE tendency towards good, the quickness to grasp it, and the constancy in wishing it; the intensity, suppleness, and tenacity of the springs which this tendency puts into play; the liveliness, force, and precision of the efforts towards the end aimed at, are the elements which, like so many letters, form, by their combinations, the intrinsic gauge of the man and determine his value.”

## MY MINISTER.

Six months before the lapse of ten years, he told his people that he must leave them, as he had said he wished to do on his first coming among them. He was too true not to recognize in himself the law of progressive development. If all of life is consecration, each man's place is always beyond. He wished to remain with them for a while, as pastor in all friendly relations, offering his salary to defray the expense of listening to candidates, that when he left they might not be led into that hypercritical, factious condition in which so many societies are plunged by the absolute withdrawal of the former minister. They granted his petition in sadness, perceiving its wisdom and justice. He unconsciously became the standard by which, though not stealing from a settled parish, they chose another guide like him, true manly, effective, an oldish man who would wander among their homes and hills for many years.

Again my minister was a candidate. Some called him "Orthodox" because he preached "sin sermons," others "Methodistic," because his earnestness fatigued them. His next and only place of work was in B——, a large aristocratic congregation who had listened to gentle, simple discourses or to close argument, never to one which sent them home dissatisfied with themselves. His prayers were short, almost boylike in their simplicity and fervency, his manner reverent, his sermons not peculiarly short, but very strong, full of melodious periods, rich, mature thought, and manly piety, with an almost dramatic embodiment of his text or subject; for one suggested the other, and a vivid searching of man's spirit, "which left not a human soul to grow old in darkness and pain." He preached doctrinal sermons oftener than the now prevailing practice, that each man might be firmly grounded in *the* faith, not *his*, the preacher's, faith. Of practical sermons he was rather wary, fearing the smiles they excited and the allusion to failings, which benefited one

person and were of no service to another. You might perhaps have called him a mystic, for the mystery and sanctity of God were his favorite themes. He had but one service on Sunday, the Sabbath-school being held in the afternoon, of which he was the superintendent, as it afforded him opportunities of knowing the children before they had grown into the fastidious period of "out in society" and therefore invisible at home. In the Bible class he more fully revealed himself. The so-called intellectual portion of his people were often absent, valuing scholarly more than spiritual teaching and estimating intellect by its command of peculiar language rather than by its nobility of thought. A dim expression of disappointment at times would shade his face as some intelligent listener, utterly changing his words, asked if so and so was what he had meant to say; or, adopting his idea as her own, believed herself a thinking being. His chief comfort was his class of young girls. So great was his unconsciousness that, whether with them or away from them, he himself was forgotten except as an influence to lead them to the thought of God and Christ. Among his means of persuasion, the pressure of the hand or the brotherly or fatherly touch upon the shoulder were wanting. If young girls liked him and he them, it must be because they met, soul to soul, and on him the stronger, it depended to preserve this relation, while winning their entire confidence and love.

He had a keen sense of the fitness of things, and therefore did not wonder that many of the highly-educated women seldom came to the sewing-circle, and that the more developed side of character could not be seen among fifty sewing females, though he maintained the advantage of such meetings and their entire freedom from scandal. But why should I rehearse his various means of work, the subscriptions, the extra meetings, etc., his methods and plans being often changed to keep the people's interest awake and himself fresh. There was plenty of work to satisfy the most organizing mind. Each person did some one or two things,

not a few, the whole. How he effected this, I know not, but I also know that no parent ever complained of too much requisition made by the church upon her child; that no fevers were contracted from over-work; no homes deprived of its younger members every day in every week; no solitary calls from the pastor about some enterprise which interrupted the pleasant home evening; yet no church gave more or did more than his, and after he had been with them a few years, no church believed more. Many things and books were to him religious, where others had only seen a possible culture. Art, Ruskin, the Brownings, Nature, suggested sermons for which he found a biblical text. His study walls were not confined to scriptural engravings nor his library to pictorial Bibles.

His sermons were written between Thursday and Saturday mornings. To begin them on Monday (which he always held as his half-holiday), produced, he said, an ebbing tide in his subject and in his interest. He often took tea away from home, but never became a "diner-out." His hard work was done in the early morning, giving the evening and late afternoon to pastoral calls and engagements. Sunday evening, those of his people who wished to do so visited him in his parlor. He rather shunned the entrance of any one into his study, not wishing the revelation it would give of himself to those who were quick in appreciating character from its inanimate surroundings, and loving his pictures and books too much to endure "intelligent" comments upon them. His parlor, on the contrary, produced an anomalous appearance, as it bore the evident marks of being furnished by a committee and decorated by cosmopolitan taste. One ornament was a tête-à-tête tea-set, never yet used by himself and the giver, who finally looked upon it as "so much out of pocket." He seldom worked beyond the limits of his parish. Occasionally, when some great subject agitated the public, his voice was heard, or in denominational effort he was always ready. School committees and public offices he declined. Anonymous notes as to the wearing or non-wearing of some tradi-

tional ministerial dress, or the reading of special hymns for special states of souls in peculiar cases, supposed unknown to him, fell to his lot, urging him to closer self-investigation and harder effort, not to the granting of each request.

His funeral services were peculiar to himself. On entering the room, he never spoke to the family, searching for the face of the chief mourner under the heavy veil, nor did he pray for each member of the group as each incurring a special loss. His voice, at first low, would rise into such tones of triumph that perhaps none but those far on in Christian experience could bear it. To him the funeral was the apotheosis of the lost friend; each heart, though sorrowing, should bid the dead the truest "God speed" in his onward progress to the presence of his Maker. At the grave the triumphant burden of his prayer was still, rejoice, rejoice! Nor was he ever induced by sympathetic feeling at such a solemn hour to over-estimate the qualities of the dead, which undue praise often makes the hearer question, "What matters it whether good or bad in life?" and throws another germ of scepticism into his mind.

On friendly, even intimate relations with all his parish, some became his chosen companions, and if they were not always members of his society, so much more became the friendship a relief to his mind and heart.

Thus losing and gaining families because always true to what he deemed right, years passed away till dim rumor said that he thought of leaving us. (I was then living in B——.) We besought him by letters and words, by personal and public action, not to forsake us. We told him he was still young, we had grown up under his care, he had baptized us, married us, and must bury us. He listened, smiled, and waited a few months, and then one Sunday told us that, for our welfare and for his, he must resign his ministry; that though he felt no decrease of mental vigor, his physical powers were much impaired; that after twenty or twenty-five years of preaching in the same pulpit, though the truth was still fresh, his mode of presenting it was not adapted to the new forms of expres-



sion and new methods of work. Times had changed faster than he had. He would stay with us a year or eighteen months, resigning half his salary, until we found a new minister, giving the same reasons which actuated him to such a course that he had given in his first parish. We grieved sorely, but could not change his decision. Those were bitter Sundays when candidates preached. A full year had gone, before we chose another clergyman, and not then should we have decided, if his determined will had not guided us. None who were present will ever forget the ordaining prayer he offered for his successor. He declined the preaching of the sermon, taking upon himself a father's part, praying for him and for us, and charging him to do his utmost duty to extreme tension of body and soul; and then our own white-haired minister, with tremulous voice and uplifted, shaking hand, blessed us with a blessing which has never faded in our memories, and went home to his study, leaving to us the festivities for which we had little heart.

He moved among us three or four weeks longer, and then took up his abode in a quiet little village, where he preached to the few who welcomed gladly the teachings of their early faith, of which time and change had long deprived them. Every summer the little hall was filled by his old parishioners, who came there to be near him for a little while, among whom he wandered, each year more feebly, a venerated saint.

Such was, is, my minister, and therefore do I love my three pictures.

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"PIETY draws us to what is most powerful, which is God, and to what is most weak, as children, the aged, the poor, the sick, the unhappy, the afflicted. Without piety, old age offends the sight, infirmity repels, imbecility shocks us. With it, we see in old age only long life; in infirmity, suffering; in imbecility, misfortune; we feel only respect, compassion, and the desire to relieve."

## RANDOM READINGS.

## AN OBJECTIONABLE BOOK.\*

WE select this book as the subject of a few remarks, because it is a favorable specimen of a sort of book that we disapprove. We think the Bible cannot be adequately reproduced in another form, and that no substitute can fully supply its place. The Old Testament history has had an important place in the religious education of many Christian generations. It is written with the inspiration of a spirit that vividly discerned the immanence of God in all history, the immediate agency of his providence in all events, the revelation of a divine purpose in all that happens to individuals and to nations. In the affairs of men, in the operations of nature, in the motions of the human spirit, God is everywhere distinctly recognized and acknowledged in it. All other history is susceptible of being written in the same spirit, but it never has been. The Bible stands alone in this respect. Therefore is it, notwithstanding occasional errors of fact and opinion, the most profoundly true of all the histories that have ever been written. Hence its religious influence, its edifying uses. Hence it is that faith and conscience ever draw fresh strength from a reverent perusal of it. What, then, is the use of a book that gives a version of the story from which this spirit is discharged? Why call the child's attention at all to the history so related? What is its advantage over any other history? What has it to do with religious education? It is said indeed, in the preface to this book, that children will "thus be prepared to understand the life, customs, and religion of the people among whom Christ lived and taught;" but the old dispensation is a preparation for the new, in a much wider and deeper sense than is thus indicated, and in a way which those who get all their knowledge of it from this book will miss. Is it meant that the child's belief respecting what is commonly called supernaturalism, shall not be forestalled? Is the idea to be sedulously excluded

\* The Bible Story told for Children; from the Time of Abraham to the Time of Christ. By a Teacher. Edited by E. Y. L. Boston: Walker, Fuller, & Co.

from his mind, that when wise and holy men have been raised up to accomplish God's purposes in the religious education of the world, they have had so clear and certain a perception of the divine will, in the depths of their own souls, and such an assured conviction of their call to execute it, that they could go to their fellow-men, and say in simplest truth, "Thus saith the Lord," and that they have, in the fulfilment of their mission, found themselves in the possession of a control over the powers and elements of nature which does not belong to common men in ordinary circumstances? It is assuming a great responsibility to indoctrinate him in such a negative. All religious education is, to some extent, a forestalling of the child's future belief. If we undertake to give him religious instruction, we must teach him something, and we need not hesitate to do so, provided we at the same time teach him the duty of keeping his mind ever open to all the light that shall dawn upon it in the whole course of his life. The author and the editor of this book have no scruples about communicating private opinions to their young pupils. In speaking of the death of the first-born of the Egyptians, the author says, "Many persons think that Moses sent a party of his armed men to do this, that his people might escape in the great confusion, and justified himself by thinking of the Hebrew babies Pharaoh had once killed." But the editor adds in a note, "Let the children be made to understand that the natural instincts of the wronged Hebrew mothers, employed as servants, were the armed men of Moses, who may have destroyed the first-born." Why, we ask in wonder, should the children "be made to understand" any such thing?

Is it said that by giving children the Bible with its relations of miracle unexplained, we are bringing them up supernaturalists? So be it. But, be it remembered, that the silence of an instructor often teaches as effectually as his speech. By giving children the Bible with supernaturalism left out, there is danger of our bringing them up positivists, with no faith or ideas in regard to anything that they cannot see, taste, or handle. Which shall we have, the Bible or Comte?

Fifty years ago the whole Bible was put into the hands of children with all its pictures of flagrant wickedness, and all its unexplained mysteries, together with all that is suited to touch

and quicken their spirits, and form and elevate their character; and, to say the very least, no harm came of it. Somehow or other, the pictures of sin, if understood, operated as they were meant to do, as warnings and not as examples; the wonderful and mysterious elements of the book stimulated the thought of the child and directed his gaze upward to something above himself and the visible world; and such passages as were adapted to his comprehension and suited to edify him, were instinctively selected, and frequently recurred to, and intently dwelt upon; and a spirit of reverent and trustful piety was generated, which we should do well carefully to cultivate by all our methods of religious education.

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### CHRISTIANITY BEYOND THE PALE OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

#### HINDU ALMSGIVING.

In reading the following account of Hindu charity in the "North British" for March, we have been forcibly reminded of that very striking portion of the Saviour's Parable touching the great and final Assize, which sets forth the accepted disciple as unconscious of his Christianity, "When saw we *Thee* an hungered and fed Thee?" And, also, of the Lord's words, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." E.

In the religious system of the Hindus almsgiving has all the importance of a sacrament. As a man obtains an earthly birth from his parents, and a mystical birth by investiture with the sacred cord, so by charity he is made meet for that heavenly birth and reunion with the divine elements which his body obtains on the funeral-pyre. Practically the Hindu attends to no portion of his religious duties more than to almsgiving. Nor is this altogether unselfish. Public opinion is not strict to mark many things which, in this country, would sink a man in infamy. Men who have committed certain kinds of dishonesty, which here would make them outcasts, may still hope to enjoy the respect of their neighbors; the usurer may be ever so hard without fear of general censure; a native jury can seldom be got to return a verdict of guilty in cases of forgery; and acts that would be condemned as the sharpest practice in other countries escape notice in Bengal, or

are noticed with praise. But one offence public opinion never condones. A shopkeeper who habitually sends the beggar empty away may be strict in all his dealings, but he never prospers. A proprietor may be a good landlord, but if he shuts his gate against the poor, he is always an unpopular one. At every family ceremony, at a birth, at a marriage, when the child is inducted into his father's caste, when the air is still tainted with the smoke from the funeral pile, when the kinsmen gather together each year to commemorate their ancestor's obsequies, a distribution of food forms part of the solemnity. In general, each village looks after its own poor, and almost every landholder dispenses daily rations to the necessitous persons on his estate. About sunrise crowds of diseased objects — lepers and cripples — begin to gather in the rich man's court, and loudly grumble if the steward diminishes by a single grain the customary dole. The last remnant of greatness to which a fallen family clings is this daily practice of almsgiving. Of the ancient magnificence of the Burbhoom Rajahs, only two half-starved elephants remain; their palaces, mosques, and baths are now unsightly heaps of brick; their canals and trim watercourses have filled up; the great flower-garden, in which the bones of seven generations of princes repose, has relapsed into jungle; but every forenoon a train of aged and impotent folk may be seen issuing, each with his little portion of rice, from the ruins.

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#### CHRISTIAN LIBERALISM IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH, NORTHAMPTON, ENGLAND, 1570.

"A remarkable specimen survives, in an account of the Church of Northampton, of what English Protestantism could become under favoring conditions. Under the combined management of the Bishop of Peterborough and the Mayor and Corporation of the city, the laity and clergy of Northamptonshire worked harmoniously together. On Sundays and holydays the usual services were read from the Prayer-book. In the morning there was a sermon; in the afternoon, when prayers were over, the 'youth' were instructed in Calvin's Catechism. On Tuesdays and *Thursdays* [does not this recall the 'Thursday Lecture'?—E.] a

'lecture of Scripture' was read, with extracts from the Liturgy, and afterwards there was a general meeting of the congregation, with the Mayor in the chair, for 'correction of discord, blasphemy, whoredom, drunkenness, or offences against religion.'

.. . Communion was held four times a year. The clergyman of each parish visited from house to house during the preceding fortnight to prepare his flock. The table was in the body of the church, at the far end of the middle aisle; and while the people were communicating, 'a minister in the pulpit read to them comfortable scriptures of the Passion.'

" . . . The congregation of Northampton, 'as a confession of faith, accepted Holy Scripture as the Word of God, to be read alike by all, learned and unlearned;' but 'they did condemn as a tyrannous yoke whatever men had set up of their own invention to make articles of faith, or bind men's consciences to their laws and statutes; they contented themselves with the simplicity of the pure Word of God and doctrine thereof, a summary abridgment of which they acknowledged to be contained in that Confession of Faith used by all Christians, commonly called the Creed of the Apostles.' " — *Froude, Order of the Services in the Church of Northampton, June 5, 1571.*

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#### DON'T BE DISCOURAGED.

Don't be discouraged if in the outset of life things do not go on smoothly. It seldom happens that the hopes we cherish of the future are realized. The path of life in the prospect is smooth and level enough, but when we come to travel it, we find it all uphill, and generally rough enough. The journey is a laborious one, and whether poor or wealthy, high or low, we shall find our disappointment, if we have built on other calculation. To endure cheerfully what must be, and to elbow our way as easily as we can, hoping for a little, yet striving for much, is perhaps the true plan.

But don't be discouraged, if occasionally you slip by the way, and your neighbors tread over you a little; in other words, don't let a failure or two dishearten you, — accidents will happen; miscalculations will sometimes be made; things will often turn differ-

ently from our expectations, and we may be sufferers. It is worth while to remember that fortune is like the skies in April, — sometimes clouded, and sometimes clear and favorable, and, as it would be folly to despair of again seeing the sun because the day is stormy, so it is equally unwise to sink into desponding when fortune frowns, since, in the common course of things, she may be surely expected to smile again. And, again, don't be discouraged if you are deceived in the people of the world ; it often happens that men wear borrowed clothes, and sometimes those who have long stood fair before the world are very rotten at the core. From sources such as these you may be deceived ; and you will naturally under such deceptions. To these you must become used ; if you fear, as most people do, they will lose their novelty before you grow gray, and you will learn to trust men cautiously and examine their characters closely before you allow them great opportunities to injure you. Don't be discouraged under any circumstances. Go steadily forward, rather consult your own conscience than the opinions of men ; though the last is not to be disregarded. Be industrious, be frugal, be honest ; deal in perfect kindness with all that come in your way, exercising a neighborly and obliging spirit in your whole intercourse, and if you do not prosper as rapidly as any of your neighbors, depend upon it you will be as happy.

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#### HOW SHALL CHILDREN DO GOOD?

CHILDREN often say, "How can we do any good? We should like to do some good to the poor, but how can we? We do not possess anything of our own. We go to our father and mother, and they give us something to give to the poor ; but it is not our gift, and if they tell us what to do for them, it is not our thought ; it was all their plan ; it cannot be called our charity." The children are right ; they cannot give, they cannot form intelligent and practical plans for the relief of the sufferers in this world. I knew a little girl who felt so much pain because she had nothing to give, that she was in the habit, every day, of asking her mother to give her what she thought right for her to eat, and then she set apart a certain portion of it to give to the poor, who came to the house to ask alms, and she felt, and she had a right to feel, that



she gave something that was her own; and she had earned this pleasure by self-sacrifice, and though it may seem a small thing, it was in fact a great principle that she illustrated.

But it is certainly true that giving, in the common acceptation of the term, is not in the power of children; they have not the means, and if they had, they have not the discretion and wisdom that is required to bestow favors. What they have, either of money or of wisdom, they receive from those on whom they depend.

But have children then nothing to give? Can they do no good in the world? Do they receive all, and bestow nothing? Are they quite cut off from the enjoyment of that purest of all pleasures, — the feeling that one heavy heart is the lighter for their love and kindness? May they not cherish the divine ambition to bless others less happy than themselves? May they not be allowed to bring their little urns also, and pour them into the stream of human joy? Oh, yes! children may do much. Life, true life, happiness, like Joseph's coat, is of many colors. They can always give that which every human heart craves and welcomes, and which every happy child possesses in its own right, and can bestow upon another. Love flows from the heart of a little child as purely and as freely as from the heart of the profoundest philosopher, and it is like the dew of heaven upon the parched ground; it can revive the failing heart and wake up the flowers of life in the most barren places; it can lighten the heaviest load; it seems like the voice of God to his suffering children, bidding them not to despair.

Suppose yourself a sufferer from extreme poverty, and that some one who considered it a duty to help you gives you such aid as you need, but coldly and unkindly, with no word of sympathy or pity for you, and another, perhaps a poor little child, breaks its small crust of bread, and gives you half of it with words of love, and tears of sorrow that he has no more to give; — who would you feel was your true benefactor?

What is the worst and bitterest feeling in the heart of the sufferer? It is often the idea that he is an outcast, that no one cares for him, that the feast of life is spread out for all but him. All the happy turn away from him. Give him food, and give him clothes, and if you do not give him kindness and sympathy, he regards them not. Make him feel that you recognize him as a

brother, and the meanest flower that you may chance to drop at his feet would be precious to him. But you will say, "How can I feel love towards all the poor sufferers in the world?" I reply, "How did Jesus learn to feel for all mankind?" He doubtless during his childhood and early youth studied the great law of the brotherhood of man, till that divine love grew in his heart which prepared him for his heavenly ministry, and then he poured it forth in all its fulness upon the sufferers around him. "Tell John," he said to the messengers who would know if he was the Christ, "that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

This he considered the proof that God sent him. There are so many cruel distinctions among men that it requires an effort to see and believe and remember that we are all equally the children of God. Even in this our country, where there is enough for all, children are daily born in damp, dark cellars to an inheritance of miserable poverty and pain: is it not work enough for a child to learn that these unhappy beings are all the children of God; that they have a claim upon him as their brothers and sisters, and that they are calling for help from every Christian heart? Is it not work enough for the child, in his early days, so to study the perfect law of love and liberty that when his reason is strong, and his highest faculties are matured, he shall be prepared to live a life of self-denial and self-devotion, and to consecrate himself to the cause of humanity, to the service of his suffering brethren?

We hear nothing of the *works* of Jesus when he was a child, we only hear of him as a learner in the temple, hearing and asking questions. A friend of children has said, "To learn to listen to the voice of instruction, and to render it more instructive still by asking questions, this is the beginning of true wisdom. To hear and to ask is the special duty and chief occupation of childhood and youth. To children, therefore, to the young, the example of Jesus sitting in the temple among the wisest of his nation is peculiarly interesting and useful. In the course of education which Divine Providence has laid out for the successive generations of man, it is the calling of the young, not only to overtake those who have set out before them in the way of perfection, but to outrun them in the course." If this should be the work, and is the duty of children, what is the duty of the parents? Are they faithful in this part of the education of children of which we have

been speaking? They would have them enter college with honor, and they provide them with competent teachers; they would have them dance well, and they take pains to secure the most accomplished teacher for this purpose. So in religion, as far as it relates to the creed, none but the right faith is allowed; but how many parents are there who think they are bound to teach to their children the divine science of philanthropy, the true love of man, telling them day by day the simple story of human brotherhood as taught by Jesus, and the duties that grow out of it, and so prepare them for those duties? Do they teach them this law of universal love repeating line upon line, precept upon precept? and thus kindle in their young hearts a flame that shall never be extinguished till they shall

"Labor with a glorious great intent,  
And never rest, until they forth have brought  
The eternal brood of glory excellent."

To perform deeds that shall bless others, must be held up to children as their great reward, when they, by faithful study of truth and duty, and the surer enlightenment of a life of purity and love, shall become wise enough, perhaps, to know how to do good to their suffering brethren, and good enough to deserve the joy.

In the mean time, the love that is growing in their hearts will, like an inward sun, illumine their whole being, and unconsciously they will bless all around them.

Therefore, to a child who came to ask me how he should do any good, I would say, "Seek daily and hourly to *be* good. When you are called upon to make any little sacrifice for the good of another, make it cheerfully, freely. Do what you can; and complain not if it is but little. But remember that in all things, life is at present only your school time. Cherish the desire to bless others, and the holy work shall ere long be given you to do. Learn to look upon every human being as equally with yourself the child of God, however degraded he may be, however the world may cast him off. So that when the ministry of your life here begins (for every one is a minister of either good or evil), you may be ready to stretch forth the arms of your love towards all your fellow-men, and say in the words of your Divine Teacher, "Behold my mother, and my brethren."

E. L. F.

## ORTHODOX LIBERALITY.

THE question of the terms of invitation to the Communion service has been agitated of late in many of our Unitarian churches, and a diversity of opinions prevails on the subject. Some think we should invite only those who are members of the visible Church by admission. Others would include, in addition to these, all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. Still others are disposed to obliterate the distinction between the Church and congregation entirely; and some ministers do invite all present to partake in this rite.

I was not aware, until recently, that in the Orthodox Congregational churches there were any ministers who went any farther than to invite members of the Church by profession. Usually, so far as I hear, there has been even a limitation to that invitation. The form has been "members of Evangelical Churches," or "members of other churches in regular standing." But, a few Sundays since, the pastor of an Orthodox church, whose creed, too, is strictly Calvinistic, gave an invitation to the Communion in the following terms: "All members of other churches, and *all who feel an interest in the Sacrament*, are invited to remain with us at the table of our Lord."

Surely, this is an age of ecclesiastical progress. Who of us that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ could ask a more liberal invitation than this? It passes over all human creeds and all fences of human erection, and takes the same ground as the Master himself took when he instituted this service, excluding no one who feels a desire to partake in it. I may add, as a proof of this statement, that the individual who gave me the above account, a member of one of our Unitarian churches, told me that she felt herself included in the invitation, and should have remained at the Communion, had circumstances permitted. I do not know that other ministers of the same faith are as liberal in this respect as the one I speak of; but if any are, I hope we shall meet them on a basis as broad as their own. Let there be this unity of spirit, and there will be few barriers to a greater unity of belief.

A. B. M.

## THE LITTLE BOY'S MAY-DAY SONG.

"The flowers are blooming everywhere,  
On every hill and dell,  
And oh, how beautiful they are!  
How sweetly, too, they smell!

"The little brooks, they dance along,  
And look so glad and gay,  
I love to hear their pleasant song,  
I feel as glad as they.

"The young lambs bleat and frisk about,  
The bees hum round their hive,  
The butterflies are coming out;  
'Tis good to be alive.

"The trees that looked so stiff and gray  
With green wreaths now are hung.  
Oh, mother, let me laugh and play;  
I cannot hold my tongue.

"See yonder bird spread out his wings  
And mount the clear blue skies,  
And hark! how merrily he sings,  
As far away he flies."

"Go forth, my child, and laugh and play,  
And let your cheerful voice  
With birds and brooks and merry May  
Cry loud, Rejoice! rejoice!

"I would not check your bounding mirth,  
My young and happy boy,  
For He who made this blooming earth  
Smiles on an infant's joy."

## THE PICTURE OF ST. JOHN,

By Bayard Taylor, is evidently regarded by himself as his masterpiece. The elaborate finish, the exquisite music of the rhythm, and the voluptuous richness of the coloring are remarkable throughout. The description of Venice, which we extract, will illustrate these characteristics : —

And when the third rich day declined his lids,  
I floated where the emerald waters fold  
Gem-gardens, fairy island-pyramids,  
Whereon the orange hangs his globes of gold, —  
Which aloes crown with white, colossal plume,  
Above the beds where lavish nature bids  
Her sylphs of odor endless revels hold,  
Her zones of flowers in balmy congress bloom.

I hailed them all, and hailed, beyond, the plain ;  
The palace-fronts, on distant hills uplift,  
White as the morning star ; the streams that drift  
In sandy channels to the Adrian main, —  
Till one rich eve, with duplicated stain  
Of crimson sky and wave, disclosed to me  
The domes of Venice, anchored by the sea,  
Far off, — an airy city of the brain !

Forth from the shores of earth we seemed to float,  
Drawn by that vision, — hardly felt the breeze  
That left one glassy ripple from the boat  
To break the smoothness of the silken seas ;  
And far and near, as from the lucent air,  
Came vesper chimes and wave-born melodies :  
So might one die, if Death his soul could bear  
So gently, Heaven before him float so fair !

This was the gate to Artist's Fairyland.  
The palpitating waters kissed the shores,  
Gurgled in sparkling coils beneath the oars,  
And lapped the marble stairs on either hand,

Summoning Beauty to her holiday ;  
While noiseless gondolas at palace-doors  
Waited, and over all in charmed delay  
San Marco's moon gazed from her golden stand.

A silent city ! where no clattering wheels  
Jar the white pavement ; cool the streets and dumb,  
Save for a million whispering waves that come  
To light their mellow darkness ; where the peals  
Of Trade's harsh clarions never vex the ear ;  
But the wide blue above, the green below,  
Her pure Palladian palaces insphere, —  
Piles on whose steps the grass shall never grow.

There I found rest, and there the world I sought, —  
Eternal beauty and eternal joy,  
The flower of life, the bright result of thought,  
The perfect Art which nothing can destroy :  
For once embodied, its creation caught  
The right to be ; and I with pulses warm  
Took to my brain each grand and lovely form  
To build myself from what the Masters wrought.

But most I lingered in that matchless hall  
Where soars Madonna with adoring arms  
Outspread, while deepening glories round her fall,  
And every feature of her mortal charms  
Becomes immortal at the Father's call ;  
Beneath her, silver shining cherubs fold  
The clouds that bear her, slowly heavenward rolled :  
The Sacred Mystery broodeth over all !

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NOTICE. — The article entitled *Spirit of the Religious Press* is omitted in this number in consequence of the sickness of the Clergyman who has charge of that department. We hope that he may be able to furnish an article for the June number.



LITERARY NOTICES.

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*Greece, Ancient and Modern.* By C. C. FELTON, LL. D., late President of Harvard University. Ticknor & Fields.

President Felton delivered four courses of Lectures, twelve in each course, before the Lowell Institute, which have been carefully edited by a friend who loved the memory of the lamented author. They are given to the public in these two large octavo volumes in a style worthy of their contents, in a fair page and clear print, most grateful to the eye. The theme is inexhaustibly rich, and one in which the author revelled with unfailing delight. The lectures embody the results of the life-long study of one of the ripest American scholars, whose scholarship was enriched by travel.

The lectures are pregnant with matter, the fruits of profound and loving research, not only into the nature and elements of the Greek language, but of all language, of Grecian history and the life of Greece within, domestic, social, and æsthetic as it coursed its way in the transparent atmosphere that rested on its plains and mountains. The style is lucid and flowing, always blood-warm; sometimes very beautiful, with a tinge of humor. The first twelve lectures are upon the Greek language and poetry. They embrace topics of general interest to readers of culture, whether classical scholars or not. The first four lectures of this course, on "the Origin of Language," "the Classification of Languages," "the Indo-European Languages," and on "the Primeval Literature of the East," embody the very essence of learned literatures and long scientific research brought into tolerable space and made easy of access to all readers. They involve matters of profound religious interest, especially to the readers of the Old Testament, and would be of much value to clergymen. The three great families of languages unresolvable into each other are described, their structure, genius, and capabilities, and their course over the surface of the earth.

The second course of the lectures is on the "Life of Greece,"

describing not only Hellenic culture in general, but social, rural, and domestic life, roads, houses, furniture, marriage, occupations, food, feasts, dress, manufactures, trade, manners, medical profession, education, religion, divination, oracles, temples, funerals, philosophies, ideas of immortality, government, amusements, — thus introducing the reader to the homes and every-day habits of these people, who seem specially to have been called to furnish the world with the highest models of intellectual taste and beauty.

The third course is on "the Constitutions and Orators of Greece," beginning with the heroic age and ending with Demosthenes, with whom the star of Athens went down forever. In this course Mr. Felton discusses slavery and that event so big with lessons for all future time, — the Peloponessian war.

The fourth and last course is on "Modern Greece," involving themes fraught now with painful and living interest. The Greek Church, the rise of the Byzantine Empire, the Turkish conquest, the character of the Turk and of the modern Greek, the Greek revolution, the modern Greek language, literature, and institutions, — all come under review.

We do not know of any work lately published which furnishes a more delightful banquet than these volumes. They will be such to any readers of taste and culture; they will be specially so to classical readers or to those fresh from the pages of Grote or Thirlwell.

S.

*Sermons*, by ALEXANDER HAMILTON VINTON, Rector of St. Mark's Church, New York. Boston: E. P. Dutton & Co., Church Publishers, 1867.

This preacher does not soar very high, nor yet does he go far down into the depths; and he is, in our judgment, an extreme literalist almost killed sometimes by the letter; but for those who keep along the ordinary levels of Christian life, the sermons will have a value, perplexing no one with any obscurities, edifying not a few. For ourselves, we can do better to read the old divines, who seem to be quite as familiar (Dr. South is far more so) with modern learning as Dr. Vinton, and are more thoroughly and heartily imbued with the spirit of the Christian Tradition.

E.

*Memoirs and Correspondence of Madame Recamier.* Translated from the French, and edited by Isaphene M. Luyster. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1867.

An admirable photograph of one of the most fascinating women of modern times, and of a significant period of modern French life. It interests us, as in other ways, so especially because it forcibly illustrates the sore need in which fashionable trifling stands of Christian redemption, and emphasizes the necessity of raising what is called the standard of the age and country to the standard of Christ. The Introduction, by Miss Luyster, is by no means the least interesting part of this attractive book. E.

*History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.* By JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE, M. A., Late Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. Vols. IX. and X., being third and fourth volumes of the Reign of Elizabeth. New York: Charles Scribner & Co. 1867.

The many American readers who have followed Froude in his spirited narrative will welcome with great satisfaction these fresh volumes. As we have turned over the pages, our attention has been especially drawn to the historian's sketches of the religious times, and every descendant of the Puritans might well thank him for his deserved tribute to the services which were rendered by those noble Englishmen in staying the reactionary movement that threatened to carry England back into the Romish Church. We beg leave to refer the reader to our Random Readings for a very interesting extract from the tenth volume. It reveals the historian as a professor of a real, and therefore practical, and therefore simple Christianity. The paper, type, binding of these volumes deserve, as heretofore, the heartiest commendation.

*An Oration delivered* at Bolton, Mass., Dec. 20, 1866, at the dedication of the Tablets in the Town Hall to commemorate the deceased volunteers of the town in the war of the Great Rebellion, by Dr. Geo. B. Loring, of Salem, together with an appendix containing the other exercises of the occasion. Clinton: Office of the "Clinton Courant."

*Lectures on the Nature of Spirit and of Man as a Spiritual Being.* By CHAUNCY GILES, minister of the New Jerusalem Church, published by the General Convention.

Here are nine lectures, whose titles we give: The Nature of Spirit and the Spiritual World, Man essentially a Spiritual Being, The Death of Man, The Resurrection of Man, Man in the World of Spirits, The Judgment of Man, Man's Preparation for the Final Home, The State of Man in Hell, Man in Heaven. An appendix is added, which tries to show that the Lord's resurrection body was not material. All these subjects are treated with great fulness and clearness in Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell" noticed in our last issue, and in a form which we think Mr. Giles no way improves upon. But he is one of the best writers on Swedenborgianism, and his book will be a useful one to those who prefer Swedenborg diluted. We think Mr. Giles, though a pleasing writer, sometimes faulty in his exegesis. In the awfully graphic declaration in John v. 28, 29, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming," Mr. Giles says, "those who are in their graves" are the same as the dead of the preceding verse "who hear the voice of the Son of God," thus making both verses alike describe a spiritual not a literal resurrection. A spiritual resurrection is a resurrection to spiritual life, and Mr. Giles does not seem to see the solecism involved in making a resurrection to spiritual life "a resurrection of damnation."

In showing that Christ did not rise in the material body, Mr. Giles, of course, encounters some hard difficulties, especially in expounding the last chapter of John. The scene on the Lake of Galilee, where Jesus, after his resurrection, ate bread and fish with his disciples, Mr. Giles thinks was in the spiritual world. But the fish were those which had just been caught by the disciples in the Lake of Genessaret, for Jesus says, "Bring of the fish which ye have now caught." Were the fishing and the lake and the great draught of fishes caught also in the spiritual world? Such forced interpretations to meet the necessities of a theory seem to us an unwarrantable handling of the Word of God.

S.

*Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston,* published March, 1867.

This document is drawn up by Rev. R. C. Waterston, and if it came before the public not as a "Report," but under some title which indicated the affluence and value of its contents, it could not fail of being read with great avidity. As it is, our readers may be assured that if they wish to know not only of the gradual rise and expansion of our own school system, but how we compare with other nations and States who are in the van of improvement,— what is doing in Holland, in Italy, in France, in England (who lags shamefully), and in our Western States for the cause of human enlightenment, he will find the information here richly provided. Mr. Waterston travelled through Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, to learn the condition and workings of the school system in those States, and gives the information which he gathered in an exceedingly interesting narrative. Michigan bears away the palm and even flings dear old Massachusetts into the shade. The Report makes 118 pages of valuable and very readable matter, much of it not of local but general interest. S.

*The Christian Hymnal*, hymns with tunes for the service of the Church, compiled and edited by Rev. Frank Sewall.

Here are 208 hymns set to music. The theology is New Church. The selections are exceedingly wanting in range, being mostly hymns of praise, glorification, and consolation, with hardly any recognition of the great duties of human brotherhood. There is a small proportion of first-class hymns and a great many which have no poetical merit, and are only pious sentiment versified. Some of the best hymns, long embalmed in the dearest affections of Christian worshippers and which it is sacrilege to tamper with, are altered for the worse. "All hail the power of Jesus' name" is changed to "All hail the great Immanuel's name." Addison's hymn "When all thy mercies, O my God" becomes "When all thy mercies, gracious Lord." There is no excuse for such mutilation, as the sentiment, the doctrine, or the rhythm are in no wise improved. S.

*Back-bone — photographed from "the Scalpel."* By EDWARD H. DIXON, M. D. New York: Robert M. De Witt.

This book embodies the experience of a New York physician. It is amusing and instructive, tragic, comic, and scientific; abounds in great variety of incidents written in off-hand style, free and easy, and sometimes a little rowdyish. It gives the various aspects of human life as they are presented to a practising physician in all stations, high and low, with many excellent lessons and many truths useful to suffering humanity. s.

*The Annual of Scientific Discovery* for 1866-7. Two years in one is published in Boston by Messrs. GOULD & LINCOLN, 59 Washington Street, and it is all that the title-page, with its enumeration of Arts, Sciences, Philosophies, Knowledges of various kinds, asserts it to be. We know of no way in which one can get so good an idea of the Progress of Civilization in the things of this present life as by studying this volume; indeed, the unscientific reader could not inform himself in this direction in any other way. The compiler, knowing what he is looking for, can find it, and we gladly and profitably enter into his labors. E.

*History of Ancient Christianity.* In Three Volumes. Vol. I. From the birth of Christ to the Reign of Constantine, A. D. 1-311. Vols. II. and III. From Constantine the Great to Gregory the Great, A. D. 311-360. New York: Charles Scribner & Co, 654 Broadway, 1867.

Dr. Schaff has completed his plan as originally laid out, and prepared, with the help of his translator, Dr. Yeomans, a very valuable compend of Ecclesiastical History, catholic without indifference, and concise without being dry. We have read a large number of the pages, especially those upon the Trinitarian Controversy, and have been much impressed with the clearness and fairness of statement. For many purposes, whether of the divinity school or of the parish, these volumes are superior to any of the Church Histories that have thus far been within the reach of readers of English, and will put the student of Christian Life in its many phases in possession of the leading facts and most significant thoughts which have signalled these latter days as days of the Lord. The volumes are printed in clear type and upon excellent paper. E.